PROBLEMS OF COMMUNISM

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The Party in Italy / *Kevin Devlin*

Communist Students vs. the French CP / *Richard Cornell*

Czechoslovakia's New Course / *Harry G. Shaffer, Vaclav Holesovsky*

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Marx and Humanism / *Edmund Demaitre*

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What Price Autonomy?

EDITORS' NOTE: In the two articles below we continue our coverage of West European Communist developments in the era of "polycentrism." The first contribution, by Mr. Devlin, is concerned with the ambivalent legacy that Palmiro Togliatti, the man who launched the term "polycentrism," bequeathed to the Communist Party of Italy—a powerful organization run by highly realistic men in continuous, if cautious, pursuit of limited independence within the world Communist movement. In the second article, Mr. Cornell examines the factional debate that has rocked the Communist student organization in France (UEC), arising out a widely-supported student effort to challenge not only the current policies of the French CP but the traditional right of the party leadership to monopolize political decision-making and to dominate auxiliary Communist organizations.

Moscow and the Italian CP

By Kevin Devlin

Modern Italian communism may be described, without too much exaggeration, as a compound of Marx, Machiavelli and Madison Avenue.

A political analyst for Radio Free Europe in Munich, Germany, Mr. Devlin has published a number of studies on Communist activities in the non-Communist world. A former staff member of the Foreign Desk of the Manchester Guardian, *he last appeared in this journal with "Boring from Within" (March-April 1964).*

The debt to Marx—now increasingly remote—is clear. The heritage of Niccolo Machiavelli can be traced in the remarkable sensitivity of the Italian Communist Party (PCI) to political and social realities, even at the expense of dogma, the pragmatic opportunism with which it pursues its own short-term and long-term interests, and the shrewd and sometimes unscrupulous skill with which it plays the political game in modern Italy. Finally, Madison Avenue could learn something from the

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subtlety and sophistication of PCI propaganda on many levels, the party's dexterity in combining divergent principles and, above all, its success in presenting the desired image of itself to the Italian electorate as well as to Communist parties and militants abroad.

All three elements have been decisive factors in determining the PCI's relationships with ruling parties, and particularly its changing attitudes to Communist regimes, past and present.

In the party's early years many PCI leaders took a notably independent line, at times openly critical of Comintern directives,[1] but under first Gramsci and then Togliatti allegiance to whichever faction was in power in Moscow became the first principle of party policy. In standing by this principle Togliatti did some violence to his nature—"By temperament, by training, by inclination, [he] was incontestably a Communist of the Right," as a neo-Trotskyist observer has noted.[2] As late as the Sixth Comintern Congress in 1928 he dared to level implicit criticism at the ascendant Stalin. Shortly before his death he published the closing part of his speech to that congress —a section which he was not allowed to deliver —in which he called for more internal democracy both for individual parties and for the International.[3]

But that seems to have been his last rebellious fling during Stalin's lifetime. After that, he and his party faithfully followed the most disconcerting turns of Kremlin policy,[4] docilely accepting unwarranted Comintern rebukes and expelling deviants on the Right and Left at the drop of a name from Moscow.

Not only did Togliatti support Stalinism; he became deeply involved with it as a high official of the Comintern: he was a member of the Executive from 1924 on, a member of the Permanent Secretariat after 1935, and later (1937) the Vice-Secretary under Dimitrov. He was thus in a better position than other foreign Communist leaders to know of the crimes which he was later to condemn so eloquently. As the Secretariat member responsible for the Central European parties in the late 1930's, he certainly knew of the harsh measures taken against them, from the back-stabbing dissolution of the Polish party [5] to the liquidation of the Hungarian Bela Kun and hundreds of other exiled Communists. More than that: he also knew that many exiled PCI militants—including his own brother-in-law, Paolo Robotti, who long bore the marks of GPU torture—had suffered under Stalin.

Here was a weakness which Togliatti's domestic adversaries were curiously slow to exploit. Shortly before his death, however, a 30-member "Italian Committee for the Truth about Stalinist Misdeeds" was set up. The membership ranged across the non-Communist Left, and included many former PCI militants, such as Ignazio Silone and Giulio Seniga. In a brief manifesto issued in June 1964, the committee explained that its aim was to "break the conspiracy of silence" over the fate of Italian victims of Stalinism killed in Russia, Spain and France.

This manifesto appeared as the foreword to a book entitled *200 Italian Communists among the Victims of Stalinism* by the Socialist and ex-Communist Guelfo Zaccaria—a painstaking if emotional collection of case histories.[6]

Six months earlier, another ex-Communist member of the committee, Renato Mieli, had published *Togliatti 1937,* a fuller and more effective account of the PCI leader's association with Stalinist crimes during his Comintern

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[1] *Cf.* P. Togliatti, *La formazione del gruppo dirigente del Partito comunista italiano,* Rome, 1962.

[2] Livio Maitan, "Palmiro Togliatti et son 'testament' politique," *Quatrième international,* Paris, Nov. 1964.

[3] *Rinascità,* July 11, 1964.

[4] *E.g.,* in September 1936, following a short-lived Soviet decision to seek a pact of convenience with Mussolini, the outlawed PCI suddenly offered to collaborate with the Fascist regime, and issued a manifesto, written by Togliatti, which declared: "We Communists are adopting the Fascist program of 1919, a program of peace, freedom and defense of the workers' interests. Blackshirts and veterans of Africa, we call on you to join us in fighting for this program!" Mussolini rejected the offer with contempt, and a few weeks later the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War ended this embarrassing policy line. *Cf.* Fulvio Bellini, "The Transformation of a Party," *Problems of Communism,* Vol. V, No. 1, p. 41.

[5] The Comintern's decision to dissolve the Polish party —allegedly because it had been infiltrated by Fascist agents but actually in the interests of Stalin's Byzantine foreign policy—was taken sometime in the spring of 1938. In February 1956 the Central Commitee of the postwar Polish United Workers' Party joined the Central Committees of the Soviet, Italian, Bulgarian and Finnish parties in issuing a statement declaring that the decision had been wrongly based on "falsified" evidence. Why did these particular parties issue the statement? Clearly because their representatives (Manuilski, Togliatti, Dimitrov and Kuusinen) formed the Comintern Secretariat which dissolved the Polish CP on Stalin's orders. *Cf. Trybuna ludu* (Warsaw), Feb. 19, 1956.

[6] Guelfo Zaccaria, *200 comunisti italiana tra le vittime dello stalinismo,* Milan, 1964.

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years. Successive chapters deal in measured tones with the dissolution of the Polish party, the liquidation of Central European, Italian and Yugoslav Communists and the assassination of Andrés Nin and other "Poumists" by Soviet agents during Togliatti's spell in Spain as Comintern representative.

The most interesting section offers a subtle and not unsympathetic discussion of the reasons for Togliatti's "reluctant complicity." Mieli warns against explaining it in terms of merely personal motives, such as fear, ambition or even gratitude. He sees in it rather "the testimony of an authentic conviction, even if it is one that is almost incomprehensible when viewed from today's viewpoint," and refers to that "complex of reasons which led not only him but almost all the Communist leaders and militants of that time to collaborate . . . with that policy line which seemed, if not always just, nevertheless indispensable for the safeguarding of a great hope." [7]

Perhaps this anxious objectivity helps to explain why the committee's belated revelations and other activities seem to have had little or no effect on the political fortunes of the PCI. The party has ignored them; and so has the public, by and large. Nevertheless, the awareness of past guilt by association—together with the fact that the PCI, alone among major European Communist parties, escaped prewar Stalinization because of its clandestine condition—has helped shape the party's attitude to Stalin's Russia and later Communist regimes.

Tactical Maneuvers

At first, caution was the keynote. As one scholar has noted:

With regard to destalinization, Togliatti's prudence, his fear lest the new course in Moscow not be definitive, was such that from 1954 to 1956 he never informed the PCI Central Committee of what was happening, even though the Soviets suggested that he do so.[8]

In fact, Togliatti's criticism of Stalinist crimes began only after Khrushchev's "secret speech" at the 20th CPSU Congress—or, rather, the US State Department's publication of the speech [9]—had both forced him to comment, and given him the chance to do so in a way that would protect the PCI's electoral image and strengthen the revisionist policies of "the Italian way to socialism." He seems to have been the first to realize that this revelation heralded a momentous change in interparty relations, a decisive turn in the current of Communist history. He saw, that is, that in overthrowing Stalin's image the iconoclastic Khrushchev was undermining the authority of the CPSU in the world movement; and, with a typical combination of caution and boldness, he proceeded gradually to exploit the knowledge in the opportunistic interests of his own party.

In his *Nuovi Argomenti* interview of June 1956, Togliatti stressed that Stalinism represented a departure from the alleged norms of Leninism; "the correction consists in restoring [Leninist democracy] to normal, not in repudiating the system or in demolishing it," he declared. He seized the opportunity to strengthen the PCI's claim to the "Italian way," emphasizing the peaceful, parliamentary, multiparty and "democratic" approach to socialism, and proclaiming a new order of "polycentrism" for the international movement. And there was something else. For the first time since the long winter of Stalinism set in, a foreign Communist leader publicly criticized the Soviet comrades:

It is not possible, however, to consider satisfactory the position which was taken at the 20th Congress, and which today is being fully developed in the Soviet press, regarding the errors of Stalin and the causes and conditions which made them possible. . . .

As long as we confine ourselves, in substance, to denouncing the personal faults of Stalin as the cause of everything, we remain within the

[7] Renato Mieli, *Togliatti 1937,* Milan, 1964, pages 124-25. A third member of the committee, Giulio Seniga, also wrote a book, *Togliatti e Stalin,* on the same subject.

[8] Giorgio Galli, "Italian Communism," in *Communism in Europe,* Vol. 1, William E. Griffith, Ed., Cambridge, MIT Press, 1964.

[9] As a result of Khrushchev's "secret speech," Togliatti did deliver a report to the PCI Central Committee on Feb. 13, 1956, in which he lagged far behind Khrushchev in his cautious criticism of Stalin's "defects" and "errors," while emphasizing that the dead dictator had acted "in perfect good faith" and that "the party line was correct, before the war, during the war, after the war." Real criticism (and PCI-CPSU friction) began only after the State Department had issued the secret speech, with Togliatti's *Nuovi Argomenti* interview of June 16, 1956, and his Central Committee report of June 24.

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realm of the "personality cult". . . . . The true problems are evaded; they are the problems of how and why Soviet society could reach and did reach certain forms alien to the democratic way and to the legality which it had set for itself, even to the point of degeneration. This study must be made . . . and it is our Soviet comrades above all others who have to undertake it.[10]

In his report to the Central Committee a week later Togliatti carried the argument further. Unconvincingly, he protested the innocence and ignorance of the PCI—"In the past, we did not know of these facts, and could not even imagine them." (Five years later, in its statement on the 22nd CPSU Congress, the PCI was to admit officially that its leaders had "partial" knowledge of Stalin's crimes.[11]) However, he did admit that the PCI incurred a certain "coresponsibility" for Stalinism, to the extent that it uncritically accepted the dictator's false theories on intensified class warfare and his personality cult; but he did so only to move on to a graver charge against Stalin's successors:

There arises the question of what made such serious errors possible, and above all the fact that around them there was created a consensus and a connivance which amount to the coresponsibility of those who today denounce them. From this there follows the question not only of the necessary corrections, but of guarantees against a repetition of such errors.[12]

Here he was—perhaps deliberately—going too far. On July 2, the CPSU Central Committee published a resolution on destalinization which attacked Togliatti by name for daring to suggest that the Soviet system, as such, had degenerated under Stalin. In a short comment on this, the Italian leader made a tactical retreat—but not all the way back. He agreed that the line followed by the Russians in building a socialist society had been correct; however, within the framework of this recognition, it was possible to have "different judgments" on the effect that Stalinism had had on Soviet development.[13]

In the dramatic months that followed, this most experienced ideological acrobat continued to shuffle back and forth in an intricate pattern imposed by events (Poznan, the Polish October, the Hungarian rising), by conflicting pressures from the Soviet leaders and by disoriented militants at home. In the Poznan riots he saw "the presence of the enemy."[14] On Hungary, his position changed and changed again as Russian tanks went into action, withdrew and returned in force; but in his magistral summing up, while condemning the errors of the previous Stalinist regime, he approved the necessary intervention of Soviet forces to save "the new Hungary."[15]

Thanks to this dexterous maneuvering, to a disciplined party organization, and to the indecisive reactions of the Socialists and of Communist rebels on either flank, the party leadership had weathered the crises of 1956 by the time the Eighth PCI Congress met in December. In his report to the congress Togliatti polished up the image of independence, stressing the autonomy of each party and the impossibility of returning to past methods. But he also returned, in more cautious terms, to the theme of criticism, itself an important component of this image. He deplored "the absence of an immediate, prompt and complete evaluation of all the consequences to be drawn from the 20th Congress denunciations, and hence of the corrections and modifications, some of them very profound ones, which had to be made in all the countries where the Communists are at the head of the state and society," and added that the socialist world would be strengthened by "liquidating illegality and the absurd limitations of democratic rights, accepting open debate and confrontation with ideologies different from our own, liberating science and art from harmful shackles."[16]

This was, not, of course, to be taken at its face value. The PCI had no intention of under-

[10] *Nuovi Argomenti* (Rome), No. XX, May-June 1956.
[11] *L'Unità* (Rome), Nov. 28, 1961.
[12] In this report Togliatti also revealed that in January 1951 Stalin tried to get him to give up the leadership of the PCI for the ineffectual post of Secretary-General of the Cominform. The Italian resisted, and after "lively debates" the Russian gave way. *Cf.* Palmiro Togliatti, *Problemi del movimento operaio internazionale, 1956-1961,* Rome, 1962, p. 145.
[13] *Paese Sera* (Rome), July 4, 1956.
[14] *L'Unità,* July 3, 1956.
[15] P. Togliatti, "Sui fatti di Ungheria," *Rinascità,* October 1956.
[16] P. Togliatti, *Problemi del movimento operaio internazionale, 1956-1961,* pp. 222, 228.

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taking serious and detailed criticism of conditions under Communist regimes. Togliatti's concern was to win for his party greater freedom to tackle its own problems in its own way; in the process, this occasional attitude of independent criticism was put on record in conveniently vague terms.

The Fissions Within

Nevertheless, the second half of 1956 marked a turning-point in the history of the PCI and its relations with the CPSU. Since Togliatti's return from Moscow in 1944 to take over unchallenged control of the party, PCI policy had been based upon two fundamental purposes.

The first had been to win and maintain the greatest measure of political power within the Italian system by building up a mass party, achieving predominance in the labor movement, gaining the influence and resources that went with control of local administrations and cooperatives, and influencing national policies in the PCI's interests, either as part of the government (in 1944-47) or as the major opposition party. This opportunistic line meant avoiding a frontal clash with "the class enemy."

The second basic policy consideration had been to maintain solidarity with the USSR, not only through habitual loyalty, but because this link gave the PCI political prestige and aid, and protected it against the threat of an "alternative to the left."

Of course, these two considerations sometimes conflicted. When they did, obedience to Moscow came first. Thus, Togliatti had been obliged (before the break with Yugoslavia) to adopt the anti-national Titoist line on Trieste and to oppose the Marshall Plan at a time when Italy was obviously in sore need of it. On the other hand, when its own interests were at stake the PCI occasionally contrived to implement Soviet directives so inadequately as to nullify them in practice, as in its half-hearted response in 1947-48 to Zhdanov's Cominform call for mass struggles.

The 1956 debate, however, brought the first signs of a gradual but perceptible shift towards giving primacy to the PCI's own needs and problems. This, in turn, involved dropping as soon as possible the awkward subject of Stalinism and destalinization, which was taken up again only in the domestic context of a polemic with Nenni's Socialists; and by then there was no more talk of the need to investigate the roots of Stalinism. "The errors . . . must be corrected, can be corrected, and have been corrected," Togliatti told the Socialists.[17]

However, the polemic with the Socialist majority, and the growing possibility of an attempted Center-Left solution to Italy's political problems, also obliged the PCI to consolidate its electoral image as a respectable, progressive, democratic and, above all, independent party, open to free debate—and ready, when the necessity arose, to adopt a critical attitude toward other Communist parties and regimes.

The necessity arose late in 1961, when the 22nd CPSU Congress renewed the attack on Stalin, condemned the anti-party group without a hearing, and made public the scandalous Soviet-Albanian rift (and hence the Sino-Soviet conflict). The PCI Central Committee meeting of November 11-12 saw an unprecedented clash of viewpoints, with Giorgio Amendola leading the revisionist tendency in open criticism of Soviet methods and denunciation of "fictitious unanimity" within the movement and party.

Moreover, for the first time the awkward subject of the PCI's "coresponsibility" was tackled in a party gathering. In a moving speech, severely edited by *L'Unità*, the veteran Paolo Robotti told of his own ordeal in Stalinist prisons—an ordeal from which his distinguished brother-in-law Togliatti had apparently made no attempt to rescue him. He was followed by Benvenuto Santus, who roundly declared that the Robotti case was far from unique, and called on the PCI to set up a commission to establish the truth about the exiles' fate.[18]

At a press conference three weeks later Santus' suggestion led to some awkward moments for the party spokesman, Gian-Carlo Pajetta. With labored vagueness he assured reporters that "rehabilitation processes are going on." Asked for names and details, he replied evasively (and incorrectly) that "some" Italian exiles who had joined the Soviet party were involved. Finally, when asked if the commission of investigation for which Santus had called would be set up, he answered brusquely:

There is no question of a commission. We are

[17] P. Togliatti, "Le decisioni del XX Congresso e il Partito socialista italiano," *Rinascità*, October 1958.

[18] *L'Unità*, Nov. 12, 1961.

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in touch with the Soviet comrades in order to examine these questions.[19]

The same note of evasive reassurance was sounded by Togliatti when the subject arose during a television interview in March 1963. "As for the fact that there have been workers, comrades of ours, who were persecuted in the Soviet Union—it is very true that there have been such cases," he replied with apparent frankness. "When we found out about this, we intervened and obtained the necessary satisfaction." [20]

When did the PCI find out about these victims? Who were the Italian exiles concerned? What happened to them? When did the PCI "intervene"? What kind of "satisfaction" was obtained, and from which Soviet leaders? The obvious list of unanswered questions does not seem to have affected the PCI's popular strength; but it does indicate some significant limitations to the party's stand of revisionist independence.

Towards Autonomy

Meanwhile, by playing off one faction against another, Togliatti calmed the storm which the 22d Congress had raised within the party; and once more, as in 1956, the largely-controlled debate died down within a few months. But from then on, taking advantage of the increased freedom of maneuver offered by the now overt ideological conflict, the PCI continued the quiet and gradual shift of emphasis towards putting its own interests first, and loyalty to Soviet policy needs second.

At this stage, the slow and fitful change showed itself not primarily in the actions and attitudes of the party itself, but in those of some ancillary organizations, and particularly the CGIL labor federation, dominated by the Communists but with politically important Socialist participation. The Fifth WFTU Congress in Moscow in December 1961 marked the beginning of a sustained CGIL campaign to get the policy line of the Soviet-dominated world federation modified, or at least to win the right to deviate from WFTU policies in response to Italian conditions. As it developed at successive WFTU Executive and Council meetings over the following four years, this campaign called for greater autonomy for national labor organizations, dissociation of the WFTU from Cold War polemics and Communist regime policies, more emphasis on cooperation with non-WFTU unions, and recognition of the Common Market as a successful reality.

As for the party itself, it was as always extremely cautious in moving on to new positions (which it never presented as new). Its primary and pragmatic concern was with internal political problems, especially the threat of the Center-Left. The scandalous conflict between fraternal parties and the shortcomings of Communist regimes were ignored as long as possible and as much as possible. Thus, the Theses for the Tenth PCI Congress late in 1962 emphasized with soothing blandness the continued growth of "socialist democracy," with only one passage offering a note of vague criticism. Despite the ritual stress on independence, the congress re-emphasized the PCI's solidarity with the CPSU, this time in the context of the Sino-Soviet conflict.[21]

In reality, however, the Tenth Congress marked the end of a chapter in the PCI's history. In the months that followed—months that saw an intensification of Sino-Soviet polemics—the partys' position changed significantly. Despite the provocation of direct Chinese attacks on Italian revisionism [22]—and in marked contrast to the militant polemics of the unconditionally pro-Soviet French CP during this period—the Italian Communist press was notably restrained in its treatment of the ideological conflict in the spring of 1963. This was partly due to the pressures of an election campaign, which impelled the PCI to adopt once more a critical attitude towards the USSR, this time with particular reference to the current wave of neo-Zhdanovism in Soviet cultural

[19] *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1961.
[20] *Ibid.*, Feb. 23, 1963.

[21] The Tenth PCI Congress was one of a series of European party congresses in the winter of 1962-63, at which the outlines of a Soviet-directed strategy were evident: the Chinese were indirectly attacked in Sofia and Budapest, and directly attacked in Rome and Prague, while in East Berlin their delegate's speech was drowned in shouts and boos.

[22] *Cf.* "The Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us," *Jen-min jih-pao* (People's Daily, Peking), Dec. 31, 1962; and "More on the Differences Between Comrade Togliatti and Us," *Hung Ch'i* (Red Flag, Peking), Nos. 3-4, March 4, 1963.

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policies.[23] Even when the election was over, with another gain in Communist votes, the electioneering continued, as the Center-Left experiment, dependent on a divided Socialist Party, hung in the balance; and so the pose of fearless criticism was maintained. It found vigorous expression, for example, in an article by Giuseppe Boffa in *Rinascità,* calling for free debate and an open clash of opinions in the USSR, deploring the failure to come to terms with Western thought and warning against "the authoritarian diffusion of ideas." [24]

Fissures Without

But political developments in Italy were only part of the background. The PCI's reluctance to engage in ideological polemics, combined with its occasional criticism of Soviet reality, could be better explained in terms of Sino-Soviet developments. The Chinese letter of June 14, 1963, was an explicit challenge to Soviet authority in the international movement, and made it clear that there was no prospect of compromise. It was in the interests of the PCI that there should be no "formal compromise" likely to weaken its own revisionist positions; but it was also in the interests of the PCI that there should be no organizational "showdown," which would limit its field of maneuver, undermine the principle of party autonomy by reasserting Soviet authority over part of a divided movement, encourage pro-Chinese factionalism, and shatter the politically profitable image of a world movement of "unity in diversity."

After the collapse of the Sino-Soviet talks in July 1963, followed by intensified pro-Chinese factionalism, it became apparent that Khrushchev was, in fact, rallying pro-Soviet forces with a view to forcing such a showdown. At this juncture the recalcitrant Togliatti made his position quietly clear with a *Rinascità* article in which he argued that the debate over "inevitable" differences in the international movement should be "carried out in such a way as not to shatter the unity of our whole movement, but instead help to make it more solid and efficient." In particular, he did not "much believe . . . in the possibility and efficacy of a great international assembly" where all questions would be considered and unity imposed "from above." [25]

Encouraged by the fact that the CPSU now had to woo allies instead of coerce them (and presumably by his knowledge that other important parties such as those of Rumania, Poland and Cuba were also opposed to a showdown), the circumspect Togliatti was in fact nerving himself for the decisive step—the first open rejection by the PCI of known Soviet positions on a major policy issue. This came in October 1963, when, after *Pravda* had approvingly reprinted statements by several foreign parties calling for an early inter-party conference to deal with the Chinese, the Italian Central Committee published a resolution explicitly opposing such a conference, on the ground that it would merely produce "either a further exacerbation of present differences, and even a split, or else a completely formal and unsatisfactory compromise." [26] The harassed Russians beat a tactical retreat; and when the CPSU renewed the demand for a conference in its own name by publishing the Suslov Report in April 1964, the PCI stubbornly reaffirmed its stand.[27]

Direct Challenges

It had now become clear that this stand was more than a mere posture of independence, tolerated by the Russians. Relations between the PCI and the CPSU had become marked by a real, if limited, conflict of interests and opinions.[28] This conflict found unusually frank expression in the "Yalta Memorandum" which Togliatti composed just before his death in August 1964—another turning-point for the

[23] See, *i.a.,* the contributions in *L'Unità* by Mario Alicata (March 23, 1963), Carlo Levi (March 24), Augusto Pancaldi (March 24, 28, 29), Giuseppe Boffa (April 1) and Togliatti (April 18).

[24] *Rinascità,* June 1, 1963. See also Togliatti's interview in *New Statesman* (London), May 24, 1963.

[25] P. Togliatti, L'Unità e il dibattito," *Rinascità,* Aug. 3, 1963. It should be noted that during this period (summer-fall, 1963) the PCI also published numerous statements reaffirming its rejection of Chinese positions.

[26] *L'Unità,* Oct. 26, 1963.

[27] See Togliatti's Central Committee report, *L'Unità,* April 23, 1964.

[28] Among the manifestations of these differences was the PCI's explicit rejection of the Soviet line on religion, first formulated by Professor L. Lombardo-Radice of the PCI Central Committee in *Rinascità,* July 4, 1964.

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PCI. The memorandum had been written in preparation for tough, private bargaining with Khrushchev; but, in order to strengthen their own position in a crucial hour, the "widowed" PCI leaders decided to publish it (apparently against Soviet opposition), thereby making it into a "testament" which the party was committed to uphold in the name of the lost leader. In doing so, they were committing themselves to upholding a canon of criticism more direct and radical than Togliatti ever expressed in his subtle, balanced writings for publication.

Bluntly declaring that the Soviet line in the ideological conflict was wrong, the memorandum made it clear that the PCI was still firmly opposed to a showdown conference. It would attend the preparatory meeting, now summoned by the CPSU, only to resist this course and to press for its own alternative policy (which, it was revealed, had already been rejected by the Russians). This was a clear—and now public—challenge to the authority which the CPSU still exercised in the international movement.

The attitude of critical independence was strengthened in other ways. In his clinical discussion of Communist regimes, Togliatti complained of "a slowness and resistance in returning to the Leninist norms that ensured, within the party and outside it, a wide liberty of expression and debate on culture, art and also on politics." Propaganda, he urged coldly, was not enough; the facts must be faced:

It is not correct to refer to the socialist countries (including the Soviet Union) as if everything were always going well in them. . . . The worst thing is to give the impression that everything is always going well, while suddenly we find ourselves faced with the necessity of referring to difficult situations and explaining them.[29]

In this last phrase he touched on the heart of the matter: Italian Communist criticism of Communist regimes abroad is primarily the result of concern for the PCI's own complex interests, not of concern for truth, justice and liberty. Thus, in the months following Togliatti's death, the party was preparing for important provincial and municipal elections, and was again intent on strengthening its image as a "respectable" party, responsive to national needs and not to external pressures. The new Secretary-General, Luigi Longo, pledged the party to continue Togliatti's work in pursuing "an Italian road to socialism based on . . . our realities and traditions in a multi-party system, with full respect for constitutional guarantees and for religious and cultural liberties. In this we separate ourselves from the methods followed in countries which . . . have already achieved socialism."[30]

The sudden overthrow of Khrushchev impelled the PCI to re-emphasize this attitude. Longo and others deplored the closed-doors proceedings by which Khrushchev had been ousted, while Mario Alicata linked them with "delays in the necessary development . . . of the political structure of the socialist countries." When the three PCI delegates sent to Moscow to demand explanations returned, they stated openly that "there are differences of opinion between the Soviet comrades and ourselves on the question of developing socialist democracy" (Bufalini), the Italians holding that "within Soviet society, it is not only desirable but necessary that there should be a more ample expansion of democracy" (Berlinguer).[31]

Since then, this theme has been kept alive by occasional articles in PCI organs, such as that in which Boffa called into question the ruling function of the CPSU and its control of economic life,[32] or the one in which Gruppi suggested that the Soviet formula of "the state of the whole people" was being used to justify "a persistence of state power . . . which should be outdated."[33] Again, when the Russians intervened in the Italian "debate" on left-wing unity, siding against Amendola, the PCI administered a deft but stinging rebuke.[34]

The Spreading Rebellion

Of more importance was the PCI's unyielding stand on the conference issue. When the 19 parties finally met in Moscow on March 1, the

[29] English text, *New York Times*, Sept. 5, 1964.

[30] *L'Unità*, Sept. 11, 1964.
[31] *L'Unità*, Nov. 8, 1964.
[32] *Rinascità*, Nov. 7, 1964.
[33] *Ibid.*, Dec. 19, 1964.
[34] See G. -C. Pajetta's article in *Rinascità* of Jan. 23, 1965, commenting on an article in the CPSU organ, *Kommunist*.

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Italians, backed now by allies in the British and other parties, had already gained their main point: the meeting was purely "consultative." When it ended, they had won further ground. The Russians agreed that "consultations" with all 81 parties of 1960 would be necessary before "a preliminary consultative conference" could arrange a meeting of "all fraternal parties." In effect, they thus abandoned their former hope for an organizational showdown with the Chinese. Even this did not satisfy the Italians, who issued with the joint Moscow communiqué one of their own in which they stressed the need for "a gradual unitary process" and warned against "any future initiative which, due to its untimeliness or its character, may be based on different considerations."[35] They also broke with all precedent by publishing Enrico Berlinguer's speech at the meeting, in which he argued the Italian case, implicitly attacking past Soviet policy and expressing disagreement with "other comrades" present.[36]

This successful stand on the conference issue reflects in part the PCI's awareness of changed power relations in the Communist movement. It also seems to represent an attempt to change those relations further, by working for a new "unity in diversity and autonomy"—*i.e.*, an international movement open to the free and pragmatic interplay of ideas and trends (if so, this is a fragile hope: the disease of factionalism is still spreading). There is also another element present—a sustained effort by the PCI to increase and exploit its influence in the diversified Communist world.

This last ambition is seldom expressed as frankly as when the party daily complacently reprinted, without comment, the judgment of the London *Times* that "a third center of international communism" was being set up in Rome.[37] It perhaps emerges most clearly in the PCI's activities in the field of "ideological diplomacy." Thus, on April 22 a delegation left for inter-party talks in Prague, Moscow, Peking, Hanoi and Djakarta. While it was away, other PCI delegations went to Havana and East Berlin, and a Hungarian party team came to Rome for prolonged talks.

[35] *L'Unità,* March 10, 1965.
[36] *Rinascità,* March 13, 1965.
[37] *The Times* (London), Sept. 7, 1964; *L'Unità,* Sept. 9, 1964.

The PCI's interest in Eastern Europe is particularly marked. Indeed, it amounts to encouragement of change in these countries—change in what the PCI regards as the right direction, on the revisionist path recommended by Togliatti in his Yalta Memorandum. Hence, for example, the cultural delegations which the PCI sent to Czechoslovakia and Hungary in January-February, and also the frequent interviews which *Rinascità* conducts with selected East European economists and writers.

The Heritage of Machiavelli

Yet this very attempt to influence developments in Communist regimes draws attention to the limitations of the PCI's pose of critical independence. Some of these limitations have already been outlined. First, the criticism is vague and deals in generalizations; only rarely (as in the "cultural debate") does it touch upon specifics. Concrete issues—like the Berlin wall, the right to strike, last year's protest by Polish intellectuals or the Mihajlov trial—are ignored or evaded. In fact, PCI criticism is demonstrably not aimed at bringing about substantial changes in Communist regimes, but rather at embellishing its own electoral image and strengthening its hand in its dealings with other Italian parties.

Again, the criticism promises a great deal more than it performs. In particular, the repeated calls for an objective investigation of Stalinist crimes amount to rhetorical window-dressing. The PCI has always been careful to stress that this is primarily a task for the Soviet comrades—a convenient excuse for its failure to go beyond Soviet revelations. As we have seen, it has not even tried to rehabilitate the several hundred low-ranking Italian Communist victims of Stalinism, although challenged to do so.

Lastly, the criticism is directed mainly (and safely) against Stalin and, much more cautiously and vaguely, against his successors. But there is no comparable criticism of the unjust Comintern decisions in which, however reluctantly, Togliatti was involved. Moreover, there is no criticism of Lenin, the architect of one-party dictatorship, under whose rule the democratic power of the workers' soviets withered. The fact is that the Leninist myth of a cloudless springtime of revolutionary democracy is cen-

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trally important to the PCI. This myth allows the party to maintain its revolutionary *bona fides* while it pursues its pragmatically revisionist path. Hence Leninist phraseology, subtly reinterpreted, remains an essential element of PCI propaganda. The same is true of the party's position as part of a (now illusory) united movement, in the sacred name of "proletarian internationalism." This protects the PCI from the threat of an "alternative to the left." In the party's policy considerations, proclaimed solidarity with the world movement holds much the same place formerly held by solidarity with the CPSU—which for the PCI is now *primus inter pares*.

It is conceivable that future developments on both sides of the Iron Curtain may force the PCI to make its criticism as genuine and radical as, say, that of the Nenni Socialists—conceivable but unlikely, given its own complex needs and nature. Here we have indeed a "party of a new type," but not in the Leninist sense of the phrase—a reformist Communist party, clinging to the tattered banner of revolution, uniquely successful in having its cake and eating it too.

Towards A Wider Unity

Peaceful coexistence must be founded not so much on the repudiation of force as a means of solving international problems as on the respect and the independence and sovereignty of all nations, and on non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. This implies . . . an ordering of international relations such that each people has the right to work out, within the framework of its aspirations and interests, all the problems of its existence, to be fully the master of its destiny, and to go forward, within the framework of its interests, its needs, and its strength, on the road to economic and social progress.

Relaxation in international relations and peaceful coexistence do not in any sense mean a reunciation of the economic and political claims of the working class, of the people, of the intellectual and productive middle class. On the contrary, relaxation and peaceful coexistence constitute the premise for the development of new social groups as the directors of economic and political life. They mean that the struggle for these objectives must be conducted with the exclusion of the prospect of a new world war and the intervention of foreign groups intent upon the "exportation" of both counterrevolution and revolution.

This definition, which carries within it . . . the necessary elements for the working out of a strategy of peaceful coexistence, enables us to understand immediately how mistaken are those positions which consider peaceful coexistence something already accomplished, indeed accomplished beyond the possibility of reversal, when it is evident that it is a thing still to be won through a long and complex struggle. . . .

It is on the search for concrete initiatives for peace and against imperialist aggression that the attention of our movement must be concentrated; it is in the development of unity of action that we must seek the road for setting up the bases of new forms of solidarity and collaboration and the unity of our movement. That confirms our position of hostility towards the idea of going back at this time to concentrating the attention of workers' parties and Communist parties on the problem of a new international conference. . . .

The contacts which we have had recently with the Marxist-Leninist parties of Viet-Nam and Cuba, with the socialist forces of non-Marxist orientation, and with those of the socialist Arab union of Egypt have led us more and more towards the opinion that a new international unity is to be sought on a wider basis than that on which the parties deriving from the Third International move. They are forces which close ranks on solid anti-imperialist positions, parties which are seeking—in Asia, Africa, and Latin America—original roads forward towards the construction of socialism. . . .

—From Mario Alicata's "Report on the International Situation," in L'Unità (Rome), July 9, 1965

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Rebellion of the Young

By Richard Cornell

One of the most significant consequences of "destalinization" has been the demand for more freedom of discussion voiced by young Communists. Within the Communist countries, this demand was one of the factors that sparked the uprisings of 1956 in Poland and Hungary. Since then, there has been abundant if less dramatic evidence of a growing discontent among youth with the old patterns and relationships of party rule. Most recently in Czechoslovakia the young people, Communist and non-Communist, have been expressing their grievances openly.

Outside the Communist countries there have also been many signs of changes within the Communist youth and student movements. In Japan, the student organization (Zengakuren) formerly associated with the Communist party has split apart in the last five years. Only after considerable effort, often violent, was the Japanese Communist Party able to re-establish a student association under party discipline. A similar split occurred in the Communist student organization in Belgium in March 1964, when the pro-Chinese elements (advocating a "return to democratic centralism") withdrew and set up their own splinter groups. In Italy the Communist youth organization (FGCI—Federazione Giovanile Comunista Italiano) has been highly critical of party policy—so much so, in fact, that the party thought it necessary to intervene and postpone the FGCI Congress scheduled for April 1965 until after the party congress.

In the non-Communist countries the demand voiced by young Communists for more freedom of discussion has been accompanied by a growing assertion of their own views on political affairs. These developments, symptomatic of the restlessness of Communist intellectuals in general, reflect a serious break with the traditional role of youth and students within the Communist movement. The result has been conflict between the Communist youth and student organizations and the Communist parties. Nowhere has this assertiveness of the young Communists been more evident, or more important, than in France.

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The Course of Conflict

From its formation in 1957, the Communist student organization in France, the UEC (Union des Etudiants Communistes de France), has had

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elements in its ranks who have challenged the leadership and policies of the party (PCF). The conditions of crisis during which the UEC came into being—the shock of "destalinization," the events in Poland and Hungary, and the controversy over the degree of support offered the FLN in Algeria—were certainly not conducive to the acceptance by Communist students of the traditional subordination of youth to the party. In the atmosphere of "liberalization" engendered by Khrushchev's speech to the 20th CPSU Congress, the Communist students in France increasingly came to give voice to their latent ideological doubts, to differences with party policy, and to reproaches of the "old guard" leadership (Maurice Thorez and his associates). As early as the second UEC Congress in February 1958, and more intensively during 1960 and 1961, the Communist students criticized the party leadership for its lack of support of the Algerian rebellion. On its part, the party leadership was critical of what it considered to be the overwillingness of the UEC to reach agreements with non-Communist students, and the tendency of the members to "underestimate the class struggle" by emphasizing the "conflict of generations."[1]

The recent and most serious crisis in the relationship between the UEC and the PCF dates from the Sixth UEC Congress in January 1963. At issue at the Sixth Congress were two points, both of which were to lead to continuing conflict between the UEC and the party. First, the UEC adopted a program which contained not only a political analysis, but an analysis which did not conform to the current party theses. This contravened the traditional party view that all subsidiary Communist organizations, including the students, should be completely under the political guidance of the party. The UEC was accused of trying to become a party in its own right.

In [the party leadership's] view, the draft [program] is a thesis which very ambitiously tries to tackle all problems and which tries to analyze the situation from top to bottom, thus seeming to be an expression of a small party outside the Communist Party.[2]

Secondly, the UEC refused to bow to the demands of the party leadership that it withdraw the program from debate, thus breaching the traditional discipline and domination of the party over Communist youth. Despite intense pressure by the young Politburo member, Roland Leroy, who had been assigned to bring the UEC into line, the Congress adopted the new program by a large majority (242 for, 9 against, 61 abstentions).[3] While this action amounted to a declaration of political independence by the UEC, it was far from a break with the party. The UEC leadership agreed to add a preamble to the program indicating that the discussion would continue.

The reason for this conciliatory step on the part of the UEC leadership lies in the nature of the "tendencies"—or fractions—within the organization. Three groupings emerged gradually after the formation of the UEC:

(1) Those who follow the party leadership in the traditional manner, deferring to the political line of the party and the guidance of UEC affairs, and referred to variously as "followers," "conformists," "Thorezites," "Stalinists," or "pro-party" depending upon the political point of view of the observer.

(2) Those who feel an affinity with the Italian Communist Party on many issues, particularly with regard to "polycentrism" and a "French road to socialism" (thus called "Italians"); who are more willing to come to an accommodation with the socialists and leftist non-Communists (thus drawing the epithets "revisionist," "reformist," or "opportunist" from both the party leadership and the militants on the Left); who support the Soviet policy of peaceful coexistence quite strongly; and who desire more autonomy from the party. This grouping controlled the National Board of the UEC until the Eighth Congress in March 1965.[4]

(3) Those of the Left, including some Trotskyite groups, who sympathize with the aggressive position of the Chinese, emphasizing revolution and rejecting peaceful coexistence, but who also reject the Stalinist bureaucracy of the Chinese.

The successful assertion of "autonomy" by

[1] See comments in *Mondo nuovo* (Rome), April 14, 1963, pp. 15-16 (bimonthly theoretical organ of the left-wing dissident Italian socialists, the PSIUP).

[2] *France nouvelle* (Paris), Feb. 20, 1963.

[3] *L'Express* (Paris), March 21, 1963, p. 7.

[4] For a clear statement of the position of the "Italians," see the interview with Pierre Kahn in *l'Unità* (Rome), March 20, 1964, p. 3.

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the UEC at the Sixth Congress was made possible by the joining of the "Italians" and the Left on an "anti-Stalinist" platform—more democracy in the movement, more independence for the UEC. While the Left, however, is at odds with the party leadership, finding support from dissident Communist groups both inside and outside the PCF, the majority of the National Board in 1963 and 1964—led by Alain Forner and his successor as Secretary-General, Pierre Kahn—sought to avoid a break with the party leadership. The National Board majority also had serious differences with the political views of the Left. The majority was thus willing to continue the discussion with the party leadership in the hope that an acceptable relationship could be reached.

The Issues Elaborated

The aforementioned issues involved in this "discussion" cut to the very heart of the "Marxist-Leninist" concept of organization: complete centralization within the party and domination by the party of all subsidiary organizations (youth, student, women, trade union).[5] The traditional role of the subsidiary organizations has been to serve as "recruiting schools" for future party members and cadres, and as "transmission belts" for party decisions. This is the role which the PCF has insisted that the UEC must continue to play:

For all students who want to draw closer to the Communists, but who do not yet feel ready to join the party, the UEC must be the school where they will find the teachings of the French Communist Party. The UEC, like the Communist youth movement as a whole, turns to the party for the correct orientation of its work. . . .[6]

Relations between all Communist parties and subsidiary organizations have also been characterized in the past by a complete party monopoly over the discussion of political issues. This position has been reiterated consistently by the PCF during the controversy with the UEC: the mass youth organizations (including the UEC) should be characterized by "joyous" activity and a "limited program."

If the UEC needs a program, let it be one of action [in furtherance of party objectives among the students at large], not theses; let it refer to the analysis made by the party and merely draw from it simple popular slogans!"[7]

The Sixth Congress of the UEC rejected this view. The prevailing majority in effect raised the issue of the extent to which a Communist-inspired mass organization could venture beyond the traditional role of a "transmission belt."

In the course of the debate that followed the Congress, many complaints were aired. The students, in the words of a former Secretary-General of the UEC, Jean Piel, were "struggling against those old minds that claim everything has been said for all time and nothing new is to be unearthed, those we call 'old Communists.'"[8] Or as stated by Alain Forner, "sons come to communism in ways other than their fathers."[9] The "old Communists" or "old guard," represented by the former party leader, Maurice Thorez, were reproached on a number of scores: for representing "political immobility," for preventing discussion of party policy at the grass roots, for imposing "prefabricated votes" on the movement, for undemocratic activities such as concealing important documents and criticism, and perhaps most cuttingly, for their complicity in the crimes of the Stalin era which they now pretended to criticize.[10] Because of the

[5] In the course of the controversy, both the student recalcitrants and the party leadership have sought to justify their views on the student-party relationship by invoking Lenin. The students have referred to statements by Lenin in the pre-1919 years, particularly to his article in *Sbornik Sotsial-Demokrat* of December 1916, in which he supported an independent role for socialist youth. At this time, however, there were no Communist parties, and Lenin was simply encouraging the pro-Bolshevik and other Leftist and Centrist students to break away from the Right socialist parties. After the formation of the Comintern and of the various national Communist parties, all of Lenin's pronouncements on organizational questions called for firm centralization and a subordination of subsidiary organizations to the party.

[6] *France nouvelle,* April 17-23, 1965, pp. 5-7.

[7] Statement at the National Conference of the PCF in February 1963, quoted in *l'Express,* Feb. 28, 1963, p. 13.

[8] *Clarté* (Paris), February 1963 (monthly of the UEC until May 1965), quoted in *l'Express,* Feb. 28, 1963, p. 13.

[9] *Ibid.*

[10] See *A.D.* (Caracas), April 18, 1963, p. 5 (weekly organ of Acción Democratica, Vieja Guardia).

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changed conditions and the failures of the "old Communists," said the students, a new relationship was needed between the party and the student organization, as well as a new role for students in determining party policy. As one group put it, "we are not going back to the methods of Stalinism, nor to the refusal to grant to the UEC a part in the working-out of the political line of the Communist movement." [11]

The majority of the students did not deny the right of the party to lead, or the necessity that all Communists submit to leadership decisions *following* democratic discussion. Nor did they say that they intended to form a "student party." They demanded only the right to discuss, within the bounds of an independent organization, the political problems that were bound to arise in the course of their activity among the student population at large. This right, they felt, should include the freedom to judge the policies and methods of the party leadership. When confronted with the insistence that they bow to the authority of the leadership, they argued that "Communist discipline starts only with the performance of tasks" for the party.[12]

It is not surprising that the party looked askance at these views and continued to insist on the traditional relationship between itself and the subsidiary organizations. Party spokesmen flatly stated that "from the political point of view, [the UEC] comes under party leadership," and there it must remain.[13] The UEC, as well as other youth organizations, must depend upon the party program as the guideline for their political activities. "The UEC has organizational independence, not political independence. There can be no such thing as political independence for a youth organization." [14] In elaborating the PCF's stance, Leroy avowed that while "the party does not reject discussion" as such, "this discussion must develop on the basis of the documents of the party." [15] This of course was a euphemistic way of saying that no discussion could take place except on the basis of policies and positions already decided upon by the party leadership.

The Joining of the Battle

Following months of such exchanges the Seventh UEC Congress met in early 1964, but it merely postponed the basic issues to be decided —namely: whether or not the UEC was to emerge as an "autonomous" Communist organization outside the political control of the party, and whether or not there was to be a basic break with tradition in regard to party-student relations. A compromise reached at the Seventh Congress permitted all tendencies to be represented on the National Committee, a point which the "Italians" felt was essential to the maintenance of democracy and free discussion in the student organization. It was also agreed that an extraordinary Congress would be held in the fall of 1964 to decide once and for all the issue of a program for the UEC, its relationship to the party, and the composition of the National Committee.

This Congress was never to take place. All during 1964 the party leadership, through Leroy, concentrated its efforts on organizational tactics to build up "pro-party" elements in the UEC and to undermine the opposition—both the "Italians" and the Left. The results of these efforts became dramatically clear when—in place of the extraordinary session—the Eighth Congress of the UEC was at length convened in March of this year.

The Eighth Congress saw the decisive reassertion of organizational and political control by the PCF over the student organization. The party managed this "coup" despite several adverse factors, including widespread student dissatisfaction in previous months with the manner in which Khrushchev had been removed from power in the Soviet Union,[16] the psychological effect on students of both Togliatti's "testament" and Thorez's death, and the opposition expressed by an influential group of Communist intellectuals at the Sorbonne, who had written

[11] *Unir pour le socialisme* (Paris), April 1964, pp. 7-8 (dissident Communist monthly).

[12] *La Voie communiste* (Paris), April 1963, p. 16 (monthly of the French Communist opposition).

[13] *L'Humanité* (Paris) March 21, 1963, p. 4 (organ of the PCF).

[14] Louis Baillot, PCF Central Committee member, on March 28, 1963, quoted in *La Voie communiste,* April 1963, p. 16.

[15] Quoted in *Unir pour le socialisme,* April 1964, pp. 7-8.

[16] For the resolution of the UEC National Committee on Khrushchev's removal see *Le Débat communiste* (Paris), Dec. 15, 1964, p. 5 (monthly of the Association [Amicale] of Former Members of the PCF).

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and publicized a letter to the party Central Committee criticizing the party's attacks on the UEC.[17] Nevertheless, through pressure tactics applied by local party organizations on the local UEC circles, through maneuvers to play off the younger, more inexperienced, members of the organization against the UEC leadership, and through personal and ideological attacks on the members of the National Board, the party leadership succeeded in gaining control over some two-thirds of the delegates to the Congress.[18] Caught in the middle between "pro-party" elements and the Left, the group of "Italians" following Forner and Kahn tended to fall apart. Some moved to support the party leadership against "leftism"; others remained adamant in opposition and, for tactical reasons concerned with the basic issue of party-UEC relations, moved to support the Left.

The Eighth Congress in effect repudiated the expression of autonomy which the UEC had made at its Sixth Congress in 1963.[19] The new National Committee elected by the Congress was composed solely of "pro-party" elements, in disregard of the policy adopted at the Seventh Congress to give representation to all groups. Control by the party bureaucracy was further assured by the expulsion from the PCF of Pierre Kahn.

Nevertheless, the "pro-party" majority exhibited considerable "liberal" sentiment. While the Congress condemned the existence of organized factions almost unanimously, a motion approving the right of local organizations to discuss and disseminate programs and political views different from those of the leadership, without being charged with "factional activities," was only barely defeated (119 for, 137 against, 28 abstentions) by a vote in which the opposition (Left and "Italians") did not participate.[20] Furthermore, the "pro-party" elements took the initiative in sponsoring a motion of criticism, sought by the opposition, against the party organ, *l'Humanité,* for its distorted and one-sided interpretation of the Congress debates. The motion passed unanimously, and an apology subsequently appeared in *l'Humanité* as a result.

While a more "liberal" face was thus put on the Eighth Congress by the "pro-party" elements, and while the opposition was permitted to remain in the organization, the party bureaucracy succeeded in avoiding a debate on political issues. The Secretary-General of the PCF, Waldeck-Rochet, declared that the Congress was a "victory of the party's correct position within the student movement."[21] But in fact, the party's political position was never put to the test.

The Aftermath

The official party interpretation of the Congress was further elaborated by Waldeck-Rochet and other Central Committee members at a meeting in April of party organizations responsible for work among young people. "A new stage is now beginning in the life of the UEC," it was declared.[22] The audience was exhorted to help the UEC rid itself entirely of tendencies toward factionalism. "The [party] federation directorates should continue to devote sustained attention to the activity of the UEC, attend its assemblies and meetings where necessary, and promote the activity of the [pro-party] UEC militants in the party organizations of which they are members."[23] In May it was announced that the UEC monthly, *Clarté*—a chief outlet for the previous UEC leadership—would not resume publication (it had been suspended since the Eighth Congress). A journal called *Nou-*

[17] It is significant that the party felt compelled to publish the letter, along with a Politburo reply addressed to all party organizations, condemning the position of the intellectuals. See *l'Humanité,* Feb. 17, 1965, p. 4.

[18] For information on the composition of the Eighth Congress, see *l'Internationale* (Paris), April 1965, pp. 4-5 (Trotskyite monthly of the International Communist Party, French section of the Fourth International); *Le Figaro* (Paris), March 11, 1965; and *Mondo nuovo,* March 20, 1965, p. 7. An important division within the UEC, which has existed since the beginning of the dispute, and upon which the party has continually played, is that between the students in Paris and the students in the provinces. The latter have been more subject to party manipulation, while the Paris students (especially the circle at the Faculty of Letters at the Sorbonne, which is a stronghold of the Left) have been highly assertive.

[19] For pertinent quotations from the Congress resolutions, which appear not to have been published in full, see *Avanti!* (Rome), March 9, 1965, p. 2 (daily of the Italian Socialist Party).

[20] *Tribune socialiste* (Paris), March 13, 1965, p. 2 (weekly of the Unified Socialist Party).

[21] *France nouvelle,* March 31-April 6, 1965, p. 4.

[22] *Ibid.,* May 12-18, 1965, pp. 15-18.

[23] *Ibid.*

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veau clarté (New Clarity) is to take its place.[24]

The month of May saw another important move by the party to consolidate its control. In 1964, steps had been initiated to unify under one political leadership the four elements making up the French Communist youth movement.[25] The opposition of the UEC leadership, which rightly saw in this move an attempt to restrain the movement towards autonomy on the part of the students, had forced the party to delay implementation of this step. With control reasserted over the UEC at the Eighth Congress, the party saw the way clear. Despite the opposition of eight of seventeen members of the new National Board of the UEC, a joint meeting in May of the National Committees of the four Communist youth organizations decided to create a joint political leadership (National Directorate).[26] The motivation behind this tightening of control over the entire youth movement can be seen in a statement from an article in the party weekly, *France nouvelle:*

In the UEC, in certain sectors and cities, the old leaders retain posts of leadership. The [new] leadership of the UEC does not intend to tolerate the development of public activity against the line of the UEC or the existence of any fractional activity.[27]

The key point in the announcement of the formation of the National Directorate was the statement that the Communist youth movement bases its activities and positions on the policies of the PCF, as determined in party Congresses and sessions of the Central Committee.[28]

For the moment, then, the PCF leadership has clearly won the upper hand in its struggle to dominate the youth movement. Yet it seems just as clear that the struggle is not over. What the Eighth Congress signified was the success of the party bureaucracy in its tactical maneuvers to regain control of the apparatus of the UEC. However, the serious differences of opinion on political issues and on party-UEC relations, which have been the basis of the conflict of the past several years, have not been resolved, and the evidence indicates that the "pro-party" majority formed at the Eighth Congress is anything but united in subservience to the party bureaucracy. In short, the party will have to be continually on the job to maintain the control it has re-established.

Looking Back—And Ahead

Viewed in broader perspective, the conflict between the French Communist Party and the UEC is, of course, symptomatic of the pressures for change which have been building up within the international Communist movement since the death of Stalin, particularly since the 20th Congress of the CPSU. The disarray evident everywhere is primarily the consequence of the profound issues which have divided the international movement, setting party against party and impelling factional splits within many of the parties. But secondarily, this disarray is the product of pressures to readjust organizational forms within the national movements—pressures which have been defended as efforts "to throw off the remnants of Stalinism" and to return to "Leninist principles of organization."

The process of "destalinization" opened the door to challenge of the concepts of party control and discipline which have governed the international Communist movement almost since its founding. The dicta that gave the leadership of each party a monopoly over political discussion and decision-making and that completely subordinated subsidiary Communist organizations to the party leadership, restricting them to the function of "transmission belts," were adopted at the Third Congress of the Communist International in 1921 and became virtually sacred thereafter.

Insofar as the Communist youth movement is concerned, it is interesting to note that there are precedents in the period prior to 1921 for

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[24] Before and especially after the Sixth Congress, *Clarté* exhibited a distinctly independent line, reflecting the view of the "Italians" in the UEC leadership. As a result the party, and "pro-party" elements in the UEC, boycotted it. It appears that when the party withheld financial support from the UEC and *Clarté,* the Italian Communist Party stepped in to help (see *Die Zeit* [Hamburg], April 9, 1965, p. 7). The publication in the March-April 1964 issue of *Clarté* of Togliatti's April report to the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party, over the opposition of the PCF leadership, did nothing to ease the relations between either the PCF and the UEC, or the PCF and the PCI.

[25] The four Communist youth organizations in France are UJCF—Union des Jeunes Communistes de France; UJFF—Union des Jeunes Filles de France; UJAF—Union des Jeunes Agricoles de France; and the UEC.

[26] *Le Monde* (Paris), May 14, 1965, p. 7.

[27] *France nouvelle,* May 12-18, 1965, pp. 15-18.

[28] *Le Monde,* May 18, 1965, p. 8.

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the current efforts of youth groups to establish independence from the party. During the formative years of the international youth movement after World War I, the youth organizations were autonomous both structurally and politically, and they frequently pursued policies that brought them into conflict with the new Communist parties and the leadership of the Communist International (formed in 1919). In a number of countries, youth organizations existed before the parties themselves were organized, and in some cases (*e.g.*, in Sweden, Spain and Belgium) the latter were actually outgrowths of the youth groups. The youth organizations often acted as the "vanguard" force within national socialist movements to promote support of the Bolsheviks and the new Comintern, even while they pursued an independent (generally "ultra-Leftist") line.

As the Comintern consolidated its strength and more Communist parties were formed, the role of the youth organizations was bound to come under challenge. During 1920 and 1921 a "great debate" was waged within the youth movement itself. The West European groups, accustomed to acting on their own and supporting positions at odds with the Comintern leadership, argued for maintaining the independence of the youth organizations. The Russian Komsomol advocated the full subordination of the organizations to their national parties "on the basis of Russian experience." The decisive victory of the latter view at the Third Comintern Congress established the relationship that was to prevail until after the death of Stalin. While the youth organizations were preserved as separate structures, they were made completely subservient to the parties with respect to political programs, policies and tactics.

The impact of "destalinization" has of course affected all Communists and Communist followers everywhere. Within national movements, the result has been a grave challenge not only to the political line established by the party leadership on particular issues but to the very right of the leadership to exercise a monopoly over political discussion and decisions. In those countries under Communist control ferment has been considerable, but it has not seriously threatened the hierarchical authority of the party. However, in countries where the Communist Party does not control the state apparatus, including the instruments of coercion and persuasion, it has had to rely on other means to preserve its monolithic character—its traditions, the prestige of the top party leaders, appeals for "unity of the revolutionary proletariat," faith in the validity of Marxist-Leninist concepts, and pressures such as the withdrawal of financial support from recalcitrant groups or expulsion from the party in the case of individuals.

The demands voiced by Communist students for greater participation in political debate simply reflect similar trends within most of the parties themselves. Yet these demands confront the party leaderships with a particular problem, since the youth and student groups are "mass" organizations in which only a small proportion of participants are party members. Granting greater freedom to these organizations to discuss party policy would quickly lead to uninhibited criticism of all aspects of party affairs (as it has in France), for the large majority of members would not be under the restraint of party traditions and discipline.

How far can a Communist Party go toward a "return to Leninism," or toward permitting genuine freedom of debate within the Communist movement, without drastically altering the nature of the party? Can the Communist parties continue to exist in their present highly centralized form if wide debate is tolerated? With respect to the students, the parties find themselves in an increasingly crucial dilemma. Either the door to full participation of the students in party debates is opened, with predictably adverse consequences in terms of sustaining party control and support for party policies; or the leadership attempts to preserve its authority and to keep the youth and student organizations "in their place" as instruments of party policy, with a consequent increase of defections and ferment. So far the parties have attempted to pursue the latter course, while making certain halfhearted concessions to student demands. The continuing pressure from the younger generation of Communists, however, as well as the threat to ideological and political unity inherent in the Sino-Soviet split, invites the conclusion that the parties will find it ever more difficult to confine the youth and student organizations to their traditional subordinate role.

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In Search of Humanism

By Edmund Demaitre

Ever since 1956, when the late Palmiro Togliatti defined "unity in diversity" as the basic principle on which the future development of world communism was to rest, the process of "rethinking" Marxism in both doctrinal and practical terms has continued to gain momentum. Developing against the background of the protracted Sino-Soviet controversy and the fragmentation of the world Communist movement, the process encompasses not only the revision of the finer points of the once unchallengeable dogma, but also the methodical reexamination of some of the fundamental premises on which the massive structure of Marxism-Leninism had been erected.

The form in which Marxist efforts to "rethink" the doctrine manifest themselves vary greatly from country to country, according to the local political, social and intellectual climate. While Communist theoreticians in France and Italy question quite openly the chiliastic assumptions of Marxism-Leninism, in the Communist-run countries solidly built-in orthodoxy continues to impose restraint on any effort to revivify an obsolete and ossified doctrine. But while the Communist bureaucracy's desire to maintain the purity of the doctrine frequently compels the opponents of orthodoxy to conceal their heretical views, this seldom limits the scope of the investigations directed at a recasting of the traditional Marxist or Marxist-Leninist concepts.

The subjects currently discussed by heretical and orthodox Marxists cover an enormous field ranging from formal logic to structural anthopology, from the problem of market relations to the voluntaristic interpretation of Sartrean existentialism. Moreover, new themes are being continuously injected into the debates. This is due partly to the practical challenges offered by a rapidly changing world and partly to the very structure of Marxist thought. Based on dialectical materialism, Marxism claims to be a science of universal validity. Consequently, none of its basic assumptions or premises can be questioned, or repudiated, without weakening the authenticity of every allegedly final statement of the closely-knit system. Once a single fundamental premise is submitted to reevaluation, all other axiomatic conclusions contained in the dogma are liable to be reexamined in the light of the

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ever-sharpening neo-Marxist exegesis. Thus, a debate on matter as a philosophical category can easily lead to discussions on realism in art or the structural particularities of the kolkhoz system.

A typical case in point is the continuing debate on socialist humanism. Viewed superficially, the debate revolves around a problem of a preponderantly ethical or sociological nature. On a closer look, however, it appears that while the question of socialist humanism remains technically in the center of the discussions, these invariably transcend the relatively narrow limits of ethics or sociology. In fact, they touch, directly or indirectly, upon all the fundamental concepts—such as the relation between reality and consciousness, the nature of knowledge, or the dynamics of history—which provide the framework for dialectial materialism and the overall Marxist view of the world.

In trying to assess the real significance of the Marxist debates on socialist humanism, the issue should be examined in its proper historical and ideological context. For the concept of socialist humanism remains one of the principal elements of Marxism, notwithstanding the equivocal and somewhat trite connotation the words have acquired as a result of their incorporation into the jargon of Communist propaganda. Marx himself declared that "if communism is the riddle of history solved," this was so because "communism equals humanism." [1]

The identification of communism with humanism is the *leitmotiv* of the *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts, The German Ideology,* the *Theses on Feuerbach,* and other shorter essays Marx wrote in the early 1840's. It was in this period of his life that, after discovering idealist flaws in Hegel's philosophy, Marx became disillusioned with the theoretical speculations of the Left Hegelians.[2] This, however, did not imply an outright rejection of Hegelian dialectics, Hessian socialism, or Feuerbachian materialism. In fact, Marx borrowed freely from all these sources in trying to work out an all-embracing synthesis that was to turn philosophy from mere ideology into a science of universal scope and validity.

The two essential concepts that formed the umbilical cord linking Marxism to Hegelianism were the dialectics and the closely related idea of alienation. In Hegel's view, the single ultimate principle that provides the key to the mysteries of nature and history was the Absolute, conceived as a concrete idea. In the Hegelian system, the Absolute operates through its own built-in dynamism by continually differentiating itself. According to the mechanics of self-development, once the Absolute reaches a position, it immediately alienates itself from that position by negating it. Thus, it is an uninterrupted process of alienation that produces the Absolute's incessant quest for a new start in its dialectical development. In this process, the Absolute gradually enriches its content until it finally reaches a point where it becomes the Absolute Idea, and then the Absolute Spirit, which is true reality.[3]

In contrast to Hegel, Ludwig Feuerbach, one of the most interesting representatives of the Hegelian Left, proclaimed that only the sensory individual is real, while the Absolute Spirit is merely a reflection of nature. Feuerbach accepted Hegel's ideas on the mechanics of development based on the concept of continuous alienation; but while Hegel considered alienation merely in relation to its functions (*i.e.*, as an integral element in the Absolute's dialectical development), Feuerbach identified it as the principal factor that determined the conflict between man and his own nature. Man cannot be free, so Feuerbach reasoned, because by setting up God in his own image, he became alienated from himself. Only the liberation of man from religion can put an end to his alienation and thus enable him to recover his freedom. Once man becomes disalienated, he is bound to turn from "half-animal and half-angel" into "the complete man." [4]

[1] Karl Marx, *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844,* Moscow, 1959.

[2] The Hegelian Left, to which the young Marx belonged, represented various philosophical trends. Moses Hess preached communism; Ludwig Feuerbach, materialism; Marx Stirner, anarchism. Bruno Bauer promoted a philosophical criticism which greatly impressed, then greatly disappointed, Marx.

[3] *Cf.* Emile Baas, *Introduction critique au marxisme,* Colmar-Paris, 1960; Jean Hyppolite, *Etudes sur Hegel et Marx,* Paris, 1955; Sidney Hook, *From Hegel to Marx,* London, 1936; J. Y. Calvez, *La pensée de Karl Marx,* Paris, 1963; G. Lukacs, *Der junge Hegel,* Zurich, 1948.

[4] Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity,* New York, 1957.

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These were the seminal ideas that inspired the young Marx when he set out "to actualize" philosophy. The "actualization" consisted in placing Feuerbach's theory of alienation into a strictly secular context by enlarging the framework within which the concept was to be applied. In Marx's view, alienation through religion was merely a specific aspect of a universal alienation resulting from the fundamental contradiction between reality and the true idea of social life. In order to free man from the fetters imposed on him by his alienation, it was not sufficient to break the bonds between him and a religion that turned everything real into illusion. Man had to be freed not only from religious alienation but also from the State, which represents an "abstract collectivity" in contrast to the real human community in which man was to become, as a result of his disalienation, a free individual, "a socialized human being."

In the young Marx's concept of "pan-alienation," man thus dethroned the Hegelian Idea. Moreover, man, who was to occupy the center of the stage in the cosmic drama that unfolded before Marx's visionary eyes, was considered not in abstract but in concrete terms. He was determined not by his essence but by his existence, or, more precisely, it was his existence that determined his essence. At this point the young Marx condensed into two short sentences what was to become, in the opinion of many neo-Marxists, the very essence of his message. In the sixth of the *Theses on Feuerbach,* Marx declared that "human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual. In its reality, it is the ensemble of the social relations." [5]

In the writings of the young Marx, then, the accent was on man; the ultimate aim of Marxian humanism was to secure man's freedom and thereby enable him to proceed with his never-ending autocreation. It was this anthropocentric humanism, directed at disalienation and subsequent attainment of freedom, that Marx opposed to Hegel's abstractions and Feuerbach's critical but unproductive materialism.

Had Marx satisfied himself with secularizing and enlarging Hegel's and Feuerbach's concepts of alienation, Marxism might have gone down in history as one of the many challenging speculations produced by philosophers throughout the ages in trying to lay the foundations of a humanistic outlook. But Marx did not limit himself to positing the problems of nature, man, and freedom in strictly humanistic terms. After concluding that alienation prevented the individual from attaining his freedom, Marx set out to ascertain *why* man became alienated, how alienation functioned, and by what means it could be overcome in accordance with the laws of dialectical development, cleansed from all idealistic residues. In Marx's opinion, it was in the functioning of productive forces and productive relations that the cause of alienation was to be found. When, at an early stage in history, a certain group of men succeeded in gaining control over the productive forces, productive relations between man and man changed. Men who did not control the productive forces suddenly found themselves compelled to sell their products, which included uncompensated labor. This was why man became alienated from his work, his environment, and ultimately from the world. The conclusion was simple: the one and only way to put an end to alienation was to change productive relations by abolishing private ownership of the means of production. To implement the change, the proletariat had to engage in unrelenting class struggle until it succeeded in seizing power and destroying the entire structure of bourgeois-capitalist society.

This brief résumé of the development of the Marxian concept of alienation clearly indicates a pronounced shifting of emphasis, if not a rupture, in Marx's thinking. Until the mid-1840's, Marx seems to have been preoccupied by the problems of man and human freedom. But in the writings of the mature and the old Marx, man and freedom receded into the background, if they were given any attention at all. Had Marx been a philosopher or a political theoretician like Hegel or Proudhon, the changes in his attitude towards man and freedom could easily be explained as reflecting the somewhat tortuous intellectual evolution of an original thinker. But from the point of view of the Communists, such a summary settling of the problem, *i.e.*, the young Marx *vs.* the old Marx, was hardly possible. First of all, in Communist eyes, Marx was no ordinary philosopher, and Marxism no ordinary

[5] Written in 1845, the *Theses on Feuerbach* were published for the first time in 1888 as an appendix to Engels' book, *Ludwig Feuerbach and the End of Classical German Philosophy.*

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philosophy. Since everything Marx wrote has been invested with scriptural authority, it would have been difficult to disregard the young Marx without destroying the effectiveness of the Communist art of citation. Secondly, even though the mature Marx paid little attention to the problems of man and freedom, in *Das Kapital* he again identified alienation as one of the key elements in his system.[6] It was on the basis of this and other similar references to alienation that George Lukacs attempted, in the early 1920's, to reinterpret Marx's thought by placing the emphasis on its humanistic elements. Severely reprimanded by Soviet theoreticians, including Lenin and Bukharin, Lukacs was forced to repudiate publicly his unorthodox views on Marx, and his book, *History and Class Consciousness*, was withdrawn from circulation.

The writings of the young Marx, discovered long after the Lukacs controversy, were published in the 1930's. But the problem of the young Marx, or, more precisely, the problem of how to reconcile communism with a humanistic attitude implying respect for the individual and his freedom could not be discussed during the Stalin era. The situation changed in the mid-1950's when, as a result of the thaw, Communist theoreticians and ideologists began to explore the possibilities of reformulating the Marxist doctrine in accordance with the overall efforts to liquidate Stalin's cumbersome heritage.

Significantly, the first important contribution to the Marxist debate on humanism was made by two Polish philosophers, both professors at the University of Warsaw. In 1959, a Polish philosophical journal published an article by Professor Leszek Kolakowski.[7] The piece was in effect an expanded version of a lecture the author had delivered the year before at the University of Tübingen. In examining the Marxist theory of knowledge, Kolakowski concluded that Marx's original epistemology had been replaced by radically different conceptions of Engels and, particularly, of Lenin. While admitting that a certain method for the analysis of human knowledge could *probably* be worked out on the basis of Marx's postulates, Kolakowski characterized as "very utopian" Marx's thesis that communism, in that it abolishes private property, brings about the end of alienation. In other words, he not only questioned the absolute reliability of Marxist epistemology, but he also suggested that, contrary to Marx's expectations, alienated men did not recover their freedom as a result of the radically changed productive relations under communism.

The article brought forth a spirited reply from Kolakowski's colleague and fellow-Marxist, Professor Adam Schaff, considered the leading Polish Marxist theoretician.[8] Even though Schaff admitted that the philosophy of Marx contained idealistic elements, he took strong exception to Kolakowski's views on Marxist epistemology. It was this brilliantly conducted debate that seems to have focussed Schaff's attention on the problem of alienation and the concomitant question of humanism. After dealing with these subjects in several articles, Schaff published a book entitled *The Philosophy of Man*, in which he provided the theoretical justification for his demand to complement Marxism with an autonomous branch of philosophy designed not only to remedy "the shortcomings and deficiencies" of Marxist theory, but also to reinvest Marxism with its original, humanistic character.[9]

What is the philosophy of man as Schaff understands it? In his own words, it is "the definition of the nature of the role of the human individual in his relations with society as a whole as well as with other individuals within the framework of society."[10] According to Schaff, "the errors and follies of the past" have made it abundantly clear that the central problem of the Communist state is "how to make man's life happy."[11] He added that in approaching this difficult problem in a truly humanistic spirit, it should be recognized that what is at issue is the freedom of the individual and the problem of moral responsibility. However, in Schaff's opinion, these problems cannot be solved within the framework of conventional ethics, for man is frequently confronted with questions, such as the problem of death, that cannot be dealt with in a strictly ethical context. But even if these problems could be approached from an ethical

[6] Karl Marx, *Das Kapital*, Leipzig, 1932, Chapt. IV.
[7] *Studia filozoficzne*, (Warsaw), No. 2, 1959.
[8] *Nowe drogi*, No. 13, 1959.
[9] Adam Schaff, *Filozofia czlowieka* (The Philosophy of Man), Warsaw, 1962.
[10] *Przeglad kulturalny* (Warsaw), Apr. 24, 1963.
[11] *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1962.

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angle, Marxists have neglected to develop a theory that would provide guidance for men who happen to find themselves in what Schaff describes as "moral conflict-situations."

Some of Professor Schaff's propositions on the development of Marxist ethics were rejected outright by *Voprosy filosofii*, the theoretical journal of Soviet philosophers. However, the reviewer, V. I. Svincov, fully agreed with Schaff that "the propagation of the idea of socialist humanism is the most important ideological task at the present time."[12] Arnost Kolman, professor of philosophy at the University of Prague, was equally critical. In discussing Schaff's ideas, Kolman agreed that "henceforth there can be no question of substituting *Mass* for *Man*."[13] However, in Kolman's opinion, this does not justify the need for a separate "philosophy of man," since in most cases the conflict between the individual and society does not rise from "eternal problems." What Communist societies need is not the theoretical exploration of "damned questions," as Kolman somewhat unphilosophically put it, but the elimination of all factors that make the emergence of such "damned questions" possible. It is on this humanistic task that the efforts of the Communist parties should be concentrated. In Kolman's view, any attempt to complement Marxism with an autonomous philosophy of man would be either superfluous or heretical, or both.

The Schaff-Kolman debate was still in full swing when another prominent Polish Marxist, Professor Marek Fritzhand, entered the fray. About the time Schaff began to develop his philosophy of man, Fritzhand published a work entitled *The Ethical Thought of the Young Marx*, which attracted great attention among East European as well as Western Marxists. In his book, Fritzhand attempted to reconstruct Marx's concept of "a truly human life" on the basis of ethics. The Marxist model of the human individual, in Fritzhand's view, is the active, creative and free man, rather than the "mass man" moulded on a pattern of conformity and uniformity. Consequently, Fritzhand saw no merit in Professor Kolman's objection to a philosophy of man that could clarify many important but still unsolved questions of Marxist theory.[14] What is meant by the expression "human individual"? Is man in his moral choice condemned to solitude? In what sense is man the creator of his fate? According to Fritzhand, all these momentous questions could be subjected to effective analysis by a philosophy of man which he described as "philosophical anthropology," in contrast to social or cultural anthropology, which from the Marxist point of view is highly suspect.[15]

In the course of the debate, it became abundantly clear that when shifting the emphasis from the mass man to the individual, or from the old to the young Marx, neither Schaff nor Fritzhand intended to consider socialist humanism in any but a dialectical and materialist context. In their opinion, Marx was right in defining man's essence through his existence; he was right when he said that it was by producing his means of existence that man differentiated him-

[12] *"Kritika eksistentsialisticheskikh povetrii"* (Critique of Existentialist Epidemics), *Voprosy filosofii* (Moscow), 1963, No. 1.
[13] *Tvorba* (Prague), No. 20, 1962.
[14] *Przeglad kulturalny*, No. 17, 1963.
[15] *Ibid.*

The Travail of The Neo-Marxists

In my opinion, a constructively thinking person must be prepared to fight for his convictions, and for every definition, as if they were eternally valid, but at the same time he must be willing to throw them overboard once he is convinced that they are wrong or outdated. Moreover, it is the tragic travail of a constructively thinking person that he must overcome knowledge which he has gained through hard and arduous work. He must realize that the very essence of progress lies in the fact that every level of knowledge is not only the end of one phase of development, but is at the same time the starting point from which we rise beyond the existing level in order to forge ahead.

—*Evzen Loebl, in* Kulturny Zivot *(Bratislava), March 19, 1965.*

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self from animals; and he was right when he declared that "man who belongs to no class" exists only in the cloudy skies of philosophical imagination. What was missing from Marxism was not the proper identification of man, but an explicit statement recognizing the uniqueness of the individual. "The individual as a total and unique structure," Schaff said, "constitutes a value which is unique and which will disappear with the death of the individual."[16] Schaff added that since the individual was not taken into consideration by Marxism, and since the major interest of Marxism lies in the analysis of mass movements, the issues involving the human individual "found their way to the dustbin."

It should be noted that the debates have revolved around "man" rather than around "the socialist man" as hypostasized by that strange product of Communist propaganda known as *homo sovieticus*. This suggests, at least by implication, that while in the opinion of heterodox Marxists productive relations are the decisive factors in determining the individual's position in the world, they are not the *only* factors to be taken into consideration in assessing man's ontological status. The point was clearly made by the Italian Communist philosopher Cesare Luporini during the discussion on morality and society sponsored by the Gramsci Institute of the Italian Communist Party. According to Luporini, the laws of economics do not affect or contain physical and biological law. Hence there is a possibility of conflict and permanent tension between the individual and society—regardless of the productive relations on which a given society rests.[17] Similar views were expressed by the Yugoslav philosopher Predrag Vranicki, in whose opinion man can become conscious of his alienation. This results in the doubling of his personality and the subsequent emergence of what Vranicki described as *homo duplex*—a man who does not feel himself part of the community with which he consciously tries to identify himself.[18]

Both Luporini's and Vranicki's arguments seemed to lend strong support to the efforts of many unorthodox Marxists to enlarge the scope of Marxist theory through the integration of Husserlian phenomenology and depth psychology.[19] Indeed, if work and economic relations are not the only determinants of human existence, as orthodox Marxists assume, other variants have to be taken into consideration. The French Communist philosopher Francis Cohen touched upon another interesting aspect of the same problem. Without abandoning the traditional Marxist position holding that class determines man's existence, Cohen expressed strong reservations as to the allegedly permanent character of social classes. With Milovan Djilas' *The New Class* probably still on his mind, he pointed out that, in spite of the changes in productive relations, there still remained in the Communist-run countries different social classes, and that others were likely to arise. In short, class as the reflection of production relations and, consequently, as the basic component of alienation, has only a relative effect on the individual's position and destiny.[20]

The fact that Communist party members such as Luporini and Cohen can now freely express heterodox ideas on highly delicate theoretical matters is significant. In this connection, it should be recalled that for many decades the very subject of alienation was practically taboo for Communist theoreticians under party discipline. Thus, when the prominent French Communist philosopher Henri Lefebvre undertook to reexamine the meaning of alienation, he was promptly called to order by *Voprosy filosofii* for paying exaggerated attention to an unimportant question.[21] Today, the Czechoslovak philosopher Karel Kosik, considered one of the most creative thinkers in Eastern Europe, not only dedicates his considerable talents to the methodical analysis of alienation, but declares without fear of reprisals that "alienation still exists in socialist societies."[22]

The prevalence of alienation in the Communist-run countries is one of the most bothersome issues Marxist theoreticians face in the discussion of socialist humanism. That aliena-

[16] *Rinascità* (Rome), Aug. 22, 1964.
[17] *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, 1964.
[18] *Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1965.

[19] *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1964, p. 28.
[20] *La Nouvelle critique* (Paris), March-May 1965.
[21] Lefebvre's works include *Le Materialisme dialectique*, Paris, 1961, in which he attempted to describe "the new man."
[22] *Il Filo Rosso* (Milan), May-July, 1964.

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tion exists in Communist societies is now admitted by all but the most orthodox Marxists. For, as Vranicki put it, the belief that socialism and alienation are incompatible proved to be a myth. In the Yugoslav philosopher's opinion, alienation is a permanent process that unfolds in capitalist as well as in socialist societies. In the latter, entirely new forms of alienation have emerged in accordance with changed economic and social relations.[23] In the view of Vranicki as well as of like-minded Marxist theoreticians, the task of the socialist systems is to overcome these new modes of alienation instead of attempting, as in the Stalin era, to shove the problem under a convenient ideological rug.

While most Communist theoreticians admit that socialism (communism) has failed to eradicate alienation, there is less agreement when it comes to identifying the causes of alienation in Communist societies. According to the Polish sociologist Julian Hochfeld, it is in the overall development of technology, automation, and the pan-economic structure of the socialist states that the roots of alienation should be sought.[24] In societies where all efforts have to be directed at increasing production, and where production is highly mechanized, the individual can hardly escape alienation. The theoreticians of the dissident French Communist group gathered around the periodical *Socialisme ou barbarie* see matters in a different light. In their opinion, Marx's axiomatic statement that both alienation and the reification of man (*i.e.*, man's turning into a thing) result from the transformation of human relationships into market relationships is no longer applicable to contemporary societies. According to the dissident theoreticians, the paramount factor in the structure of modern societies is not the market but the bureaucratic-hierarchic organization. Consequently, it is in the social relationship determined by the schism between the processes of direction and execution of collective activities that the causes of alienation and reification are rooted. And this applies to capitalist as well as socialist societies.[25]

In spite of the different and often conflicting interpretations of the meaning and origin of alienation, most Communist theoreticians seem to agree that it is in the context of alienation that the ultimate significance of socialist humanism should be assessed. There is far less agreement on what socialist humanism itself really means. In the ever-expanding Communist literature dealing with this subject, one encounters references to "idealistic," "abstract," "speculative," "philanthropic," "formal," "spiritual," and "class" humanism, as opposed to "real" or "true" humanism—meaning, of course, socialist humanism.[26] But in their attempts to identify socialist humanism, Communist theoreticians find it very difficult to provide a definition that would invest the term with an unequivocal meaning. In the opinion of the French Communist philosopher Louis Althusser, even Marx's thinking reveals different humanistic trends reflecting the rationalist-liberal and Communist ideas that predominate in the Marxian concept of humanism.[27]

This interpretation, which so clearly reflects Lukac's ideas, is not accepted by Roger Garaudy, one of the leading theoreticians of the French Communist Party. According to Garaudy, Marx's ideas on this and other related subjects represent an organic whole. There is no difference between the humanistic concepts of the young and of the old Marx.[28] The Czech Marxist philosopher Milan Machovec goes one step further. He does not believe that a distinction can or should be made between socialist and non-socialist humanism.[29] In Machovec's patently

[23] *Loc. cit., supra.*

[24] Marco Aloisio, "Marxists and the Question of Alienation," *Corrispondenza socialista* (Rome), Vol. 5, No. 7, 1964.

[25] Unsigned editorial in *Socialisme ou barbarie,* January-March, 1964.

[26] See, *e.g.*, Roger Garaudy, *La Théorie matérialiste de la connaissance,* Paris, 1954, and *Perspective de l'homme; existentialisme, pensée catholique, marxisme,* Paris, 1959; Lucien Goldman, *Recherches dialectiques,* Paris, 1959; Henri Lefebvre, *Problèmes actuels du marxisme,* Paris, 1957; Henri Bartoli, *La Doctrine économique et sociale de Karl Marx,* Paris, 1950; Pierre Bigo, *Marxisme et humanisme,* Paris, 1953; J. Hommes, *Der technische Eros,* Freiburg im Breisgau, 1955: Ernst Bloch, *Revision des Marxismus,* East Berlin, 1957; Karl Mannheim, *Ideology and Utopia,* New York, 1949; *Marxismusstudien* (Tübingen), 1954-1964; G. A. Wetter, *Der dialektische Materialismus,* Munich, 1947; Merleau-Ponty, *Humanisme et terreur,* Paris, 1955; J. P. Sartre, *L'existentialisme est un humanisme,* Paris, 1946; J. Kanapa, *L'existentialisme n'est pas un humanisme,* Paris, 1947; and Leopold Labedz (ed.), *Revisionism,* New York, 1962.

[27] *La Nouvelle critique, loc. cit.*

[28] *Rinascità,* Aug. 1, 1964.

[29] Quoted by Harvey Cox in *The Correspondent,* No. 33, 1965.

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heretical opinion, there is only one humanism. Obviously, Machovec understands humanism in the traditional sense that equates humanism with the love of man and the respect of human dignity. This interpretation of humanism is in outright opposition to the views of pragmatic Marxists such as the French theoretician Michel Simon. According to Simon, humanism, in the correct sense, "does not mean to love man, but to solve human problems practically."[30]

Simon was one of the participants in the interesting debate on socialist humanism organized by *La Nouvelle critique,* the theoretical journal of the French Communist Party. Conducted on a high philosophical plane, the debates revolved around Marx's often-quoted statement that "communism . . . equals humanism."[31] Viewing the problem from this angle, Althusser suggested that there are two distinct forms of socialist humanism: "class humanism" and "humanism of the person." The first form prevails in such socialist countries as Communist China, which are still subject to the dictatorship of the proletariat, while in countries that have transcended the dictatorship phase of socialism, humanism becomes humanism of the person. According to Althusser, the current liberalizing process in the Soviet Union opens entirely new perspectives for the meeting of two different types of "humanism of the person," namely, socialist humanism and bourgeois or Christian-liberal humanism.[32]

[30] *La Nouvelle critique, loc. cit.*
[31] *Economic-Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844, op. cit.*

The Orthodox Dilemma

The return to Marx is impossible because, under the pretext of fidelity to Marx and in order to achieve this fidelity, it begins by violating the essential principles posited by Marx himself.

Marx, in effect, was the first to show that the meaning of a theory cannot be understood independently from the historic and social practice to which it corresponds, in which it remains, or which it tries to recover. . . . Wishing to find again the meaning of Marxism exclusively in what Marx wrote, and ignoring what the doctrine became in history, is to pretend, in direct contradiction with the central idea of that doctrine, that real history does not count, that the truth of a theory is always and exclusively "beyond." It is, finally, to replace the revolution by revelation, and thinking about facts by the exegesis of texts.

—*Paul Cardan, in* Socialism ou barbarie, *organ of the dissident French Communist group "Pouvoir ouvrier," No. 36, April-June 1964.*

Althusser's imaginative comments on the "*theoretical* anti-humanism of Marxism" were even more controversial. On the basis of the Marxian concepts of the relations between the conscious and inconscious, necessity and change, illusion and reality, alienation and reification, Althusser concluded that humanism is an ideology and not a science. Thus, *theoretical* anti-humanism was the prerequisite of a fully-developed Marxist philosophy divested of all ideological—*i.e.*, non-scientific—content. As for the practical-political aspects of the problem, Althusser views socialist humanism as conforming to historic reality, with particular reference to the transcending of the dictatorship of the proletariat and the suppression of the abusive forms which the dictatorial system had assumed in the Soviet Union.[33]

While recognizing that the themes of socialist humanism are at the core of the debate presently unfolding within the Marxist community and between Marxism and the world, the French Communist philosopher Jorge Semprun categorically rejected Althusser's original views on the *theoretical* anti-humanism of Marxism. According to Semprun, the distinction between class humanism and "humanism of the person" is artificial and insufficient. In his opinion, class humanism as practiced in the Soviet Union for more than forty years could not have had a truly humanistic content since the class dictatorship of the proletariat did not contain within itself the organic instruments for the liberty of this same class. It was this distortion of the

[32] *La Nouvelle critique, loc. cit.*
[33] *Ibid.*

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meaning of humanism, says Semprun, that contained "the germs of degradation" and led to the development of "Stalinist deformation."[34]

What emerges with the utmost clarity from the welter of conflicting interpretations and Talmudic analyses is the growing realization on the part of Communist theoreticians of the need to find a philosophical formula that would reconcile the humanistic aspirations of messianic Marxism with the restrictive administrative-organizational features of the Communist-run state. For it is obvious that, from whatever angle Marxist exegesis may approach the doctrine, the discussions on socialist humanism and alienation revolve essentially around a single basic problem, namely, the problem of individual freedom in socialist societies. This is the point made by Francis Cohen in commenting on the Althusser-Semprun debate. "In reality," he writes, "it is the political action of the parties and the Marxist countries which is in question. Marxist humanism is, first of all, the humanism of the Marxists."[35]

The problems arising from the reinterpretation of socialist humanism were clearly posited by Togliatti in the famous Yalta memorandum, now considered the Magna Charta of neo-Marxism. After pointing out that what currently attracts the attention of all Communists is "the passage of the system of limitation and abolition of democratic and personal liberties which had been established by Stalin," Togliatti added: "We will always base ourselves on the idea that socialism is the system which assures the workers the broadest possible freedom."[36] Notwithstanding his mention of only a single social class, Togliatti's reference to "the broadest possible freedom" reflects a more flexible attitude than that suggested by the somewhat ambiguous formulation of the Soviet Communist Party's present program, which defines the ultimate goal of communism as "the full development of the best ethical properties of man." Moreover, many Communist theoreticians who consider the Yalta memorandum and Togliatti's 1956 interview in *Nuovi Argomenti* the most articulate expression of neo-Marxist thinking do not seem inclined to interpret Togliatti's statement as applicable only to a specific class. In their view, "Liberty with a capital 'L'," as Franco Ferri, director of the Gramsci Institute, put it,[37] remains the crux of the Communist dilemma.

In the opinion of these "progressive" theoreticians, if socialist humanism is to promote "a happy life for man," it is on the level of the individual that the problem of freedom must be solved. This was the point made by Luporini in his contribution to the discussion on morality and society. "The person," Luporini said, "is the place where individual human choices are made. And there we run into the old problem of determinism and non-determinism, the problem of so-called 'free choice' and 'freedom of conscience'."[38] Similar views were expressed by the well-known Italian Marxist, Lelio Basso. In Basso's opinion, "a society of responsible men, and not a mass of subjects, is the primary condition for the building of communism." Socialist society cannot function without "democratically aware and mature individuals" fully conscious of their responsibilities in the exercise of free choice. This consciousness cannot develop without granting the individual greater freedom, including the right of free debate. But after advocating the right of free expression in the Communist-run countries, Basso cautiously added, "Free debate, yes—with the possible exclusion of the basic ideas on which public discussion is not yet possible."[39]

Problems similar to those that attracted the interest of Italian theoreticians dominated the interesting polemics that erupted recently in Czechoslovakia in connection with the Mnacko-Hochhuth debate. Ladislav Mnacko is a Slovak Communist writer whose book *Oneskorena reportaz* (Delayed Reportage) was published in German translation in West Germany, apparently without the author's permission. Mnacko appealed to Rolf Hochhuth, author of the controversial play *Der Stellvezträter* (The Vicar), to stop publication of the book. From this point

[34] *Ibid.*
[35] *Ibid.*
[36] *Cahiers du communisme* (Paris), Nov. 1964.
[37] *Land og Folk* (Copenhagen), Jan. 3-4, 1965.
[38] *Loc. cit.*
[39] *Nuovi Argomenti* (Rome), Nos. 57-58, 1962.

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on, the exchanges between Mnacko and Hochhuth developed into an angry dialogue on issues ranging from the freedom of the individual to the death of Jan Masaryk and the massacres in the Katyn forest. The dispute was at its height when the noted Czech economist Evzen Loebl intervened in support of Hochhuth.[40] Loebl is one of the three surviving victims of the Slansky trials of 1952. A Communist of long standing, Loebl was then sentenced to life imprisonment on charges of treason, sabotage and Zionism. Released in the mid-1950's and officially rehabilitated in 1963, he became one of the most articulate supporters of the recent liberalizing trend in Czechoslovakia.

In supporting Hochhuth, Loebl took a strong position against a Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy which claims to possess "the ultimate truth about all questions." It was the orthodox approach, he asserted, that adulterated the concept of Communist democracy by placing the main emphasis on power, as if power were the central social problem. In contrast to this approach, Loebl suggested that human rights and the individual's desire for freedom be made the starting point for the building of socialist societies, whose primordial task should be to safeguard the maximum degree of independence for every individual. In short, the fundamental postulate of the socialist system should be the protection, rather than the limitation, of basic human rights by the socialist state.

As was to be expected, the Czechoslovak Communist Party reacted rather vigorously to Loebl's non-conformist proposition. Writing in the official party organ *Rude pravo,* Zdenek Mlynar, a member of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences, described Loebl's theories on freedom as "deeply naive, idealistic opinions" which could not provide a basis for constructive discussion.[41]

Mlynar's rather cavalier treatment of what he termed Loebl's "petty-bourgeois illusions" followed more or less the same line of reasoning taken by an East German colleague, R. O. Gropp, in attacking the theories of Ernst Bloch, who had been the leading Communist philosopher in East Germany until his defection to the West. Gropp characterized Bloch's "philosophy of hope" as a clear deviation from Marxism since it placed the emphasis on the individual rather than the collectivity. Indeed, Bloch views the individual as "the root of history," and the unhampered possibility of choice as the starting point of freedom.[42] It should be noted that on this point there is a strong resemblance between Bloch's "philosophy of hope" and Schaff's "philosophy of man."

From the point of view of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy, both Bloch's and Schaff's fundamental ideas on socialist humanism are inacceptable since they imply, at least indirectly, a predominantly ethical approach to the problem of the individual, in addition to raising delicate questions regarding determinism and free will. To be sure, Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy does not attempt to divest the doctrine of its ethical content: even so staunch an expositor of orthodoxy as Leonid Ilychev has recognized that "the fundamental problem of Marxist philosophy is the problem of man."[43] In dealing with the questions of alienation, freedom and socialist humanism, however, representatives of the orthodox trend refuse to meet the issue frontally. This is particularly true of the Soviet philosophers, whose contributions to the discussions on socialist humanism reflect an effort to dilute—or, alternatively, to narrow—the scope of the issues rather than to clarify them. Thus, when the Soviet journal *Voprosy filosofii* undertook to discuss the meaning of life in the light of Marxist ethics, it carefully pointed out that the question could be considered only in one of a large variety of specific contexts, including, among others, social ethics, psychology, pedagogy, the problems of evolution, and the theories on recognition.[44] The implication was that the validity of any proposition concerning the meaning of life depended on the particular context in which the question was examined. In subsequent discussions, Soviet philosophers generally limited themselves to examining the problem of socialist humanism in relation to the Sino-Soviet ideological conflict.[45]

[40] *Kulturny zivot* (Bratislava), No. 12, 1965.
[41] *Rude pravo* (Prague), April 6-8, 1965.
[42] Quoted by Jürgen Rühle in *Revisionism, op. cit.*
[43] Quoted by Arnold Bucholz in *Osteuropa* (Stuttgart), No. 10, 1964.
[44] *Voprosy filosofii,* August 1963.
[45] S. Kovalev, "Communist Humanism and Revolutionary Coercion," *World Marxist Review* (Prague), Vol. 7, No. 5, 1964; *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 11, 1965.

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In rejecting the Maoist interpretation of socialist humanism, Soviet philosophers and writers usually follow the middle road between rigid orthodoxy and flexible heterodoxy. Their arguments, designed to reconcile the concept of socialist humanism with the dictatorship of the proletariat, rest on the specific interpretation of the concept of freedom. The latter is defined as the freedom of a class in a given historical situation rather than as a right which society is expected to grant the individual. The Marxist myth that equates freedom with the abolition of alienation through collectivization of the means of production is thus fully preserved by identifying freedom with "freedom from exploitation." In other words, in the Soviet concept of socialist humanism, it is in relation to the freedom of the class that the freedom of the individual acquires its meaning.

This was clearly spelled out by the Soviet philosopher P. Fedoseiev in an article dealing with socialist humanism and dialectical materialism.[46] "The problem of man in modern times," wrote Professor Fedoseiev, "cannot by any means be reduced to the need for a simple assertion of the humanitarian principles of individual freedom, equality and brotherhood. . . . The essential in the real problem of humanitarianism is to guarantee every social prerequisite for the implementation of the humanitarian principle." Since it is the dictatorship of the proletariat which, according to Marxism-Leninism, provides "the social prerequisites" for the implementation of humanitarian principles, humanism as interpreted by Soviet philosophers becomes an amalgam of class humanism and what may best be described as structural humanism—that is, a humanism inherent in the specific organizational pattern of the Soviet state and society.

Although a summary review of the current debates cannot cover all the exciting facets of the problems under discussion, it suffices to provide an indication of the increasing interest being shown by Communist theoreticians in the problems of alienation and socialist humanism. That these problems have now become the very center of the debates on Marxist theory is admitted by both the defenders and the opponents of Communist orthodoxy. The question is why the closely related problems of alienation and socialist humanism have acquired such extraordinary importance after being relegated for so long, as Schaff put it, "to the dustbin" of Communist theorizing and research.

The most important reason for the new interest of Marxist theoreticians in socialist humanism, alienation and reification appears to be the growing recognition that peaceful coexistence is most likely to remain the basic reality of international life. This implies that, in the developed and even in the semi-developed countries, cataclysmic situations similar to those which led, between 1917 and 1947, to the emergence of Communist regimes are not expected to arise. The external stabilization resulting from the nuclear stalemate has necessitated a methodical revision of Communist strategy and tactics. In the blueprint of Communist expectations, apocalyptic visions have to be replaced by soberly pragmatic considerations. No longer can the world be viewed in the light of an oversimplified Manichean cosmogony that reduces reality to a reflection of the permanent conflict of polarized principles.

This implies a less doctrinaire approach to the problems of life, a breaking-out from self-imposed isolation, the filling of a deliberately created spiritual vacuum, and a gradual loosening of the rigid moral, cultural, economic and social structure of the closed Communist societies. Only in these conditions can communism hope to compete with the non-Communist world with which it has to exist peacefully. Neither institutional reorganization nor the overall reassessment of ingrained Communist values, however, can be implemented successfully without paying proper attention to the individual, who is expected to play such an important role in the future competitive efforts of the Communist societies. This was what Schaff meant when he wrote that peaceful coexistence calls for the development of new social and ethical standards based on the "philosophy of man."

Another fact which no Marxist theoretician can disregard is the emergence of new phenomena in an ever-changing world. Neither Marx nor Lenin could possibly have foreseen the changes that have occurred over the past three or four decades in practically every sphere of 20th-century life—changes which have revealed many of their allegedly scientific conclu-

[46] *Voprosy filosofii,* No. 11, 1964.

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sions as imaginative but unsubstantiated speculations. Marx assumed that under the capitalist system workers would become poorer and poorer in accordance with the iron law of pauperization, and Lenin was no less emphatic in prophesying the gradual degeneration and ultimate collapse of bourgeois capitalism. But, as Ernst Fischer, a leading member of the Austrian Communist Party's Central Committee, recently acknowledged, both were wrong. The structure of the entire working class has changed considerably, and capitalism has succeeded in developing new productive forces. Therefore, in Fischer's opinion, Marxism cannot be regarded as "the last word of the human spirit" providing an answer to every question; and in order to transform it from a set of "ready-made answers before the questions are asked" into a new, living force, the first step should be to develop its ethical and humanistic content by offering the individual greater freedom, greater democracy, and greater possibilities of self-fulfillment. It is in this competitive spirit, says Fischer, that Marxism should face the problems arising from the structural changes in the working class and the unprecedented development of productive forces under capitalism.[47]

For an Eclectic Marxism

After the Stalinist deformation, it is necessary to have a rebirth, a restoration of Marxism. It must be achieved in the spirit of Marxism—that is, critically. Marx did not leave us a repertoire of phrases to quote, but a methodology and a quantity of scientific-philosophic notions. These essentials are "splendid as the first dawn" [prologue of *Faust*]. Others have in part been superseded by reality. Even Marxism is not a supertemporal inspiration, a divine inspiration. It is the highest consciousness of an era. In other words, it is also conditioned by time. It is not the last word of the human spirit. To this "blasphemous" statement, we must add that the consciousness of humanity is not a succession of epochs that successively devour one another, but a continuum. Much in the work of the great thinkers remains in the past because it was conditioned by time. But much is current, because there remains a lasting truth within it. For us Marx does not give the answer to every question. But his work is part of the philosophical horizon of our time.

—Ernst Fischer, member of the Austrian Communist Party Central Committee, in Rinascità (Rome), Feb. 27, 1965.

While social and economic changes in the world have provided a *de visu* demonstration of the speculative nature of historical materialism, scientific discoveries also continue to corrode the allegedly indestructible foundations on which dialectical materialism, and particularly the Marxist theory of knowledge, were built. How deeply such discoveries can affect the doctrinal position of dedicated Marxists was perhaps best illustrated by the example of the East German scientist, Robert Havemann. Professor of physical chemistry at Humboldt University in East Berlin, Havemann wielded great influence in the Communist Party. Consequently, the party was profoundly shocked when he set out to demolish the deterministic premises of dialectical materialism. Arguing that the corpuscular and wave aspects of quantum mechanics had refuted the entire concept of absolute causality, Havemann concluded that deterministic theories based on this concept—such as Marxism—could no longer be considered valid. He characterized the contention that Marxism-Leninism is the only means of positive knowledge, particularly in relation to social phenomena, as "a gross and conceited schematization." This led Havemann to undertake, with the help of two categories of dialectical materialism (chance and necessity, and reality and possibility), a reinterpretation of man, society and individual freedom. His self-named "new materialism" involved a philosophical redefinition of the concepts of freedom and humanism, fitted into the framework of a dialectical system purged of its deterministic components.[48]

In addition to scientific progress, the 20th Congress of the CPSU, the Hungarian freedom revolt, and the waves of destalinization that

[47] *Rinascità*, Feb. 27, 1965.

[48] Robert Havemann, *Dialektik oder Dogma?*, Berlin, 1964.

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have swept through many of the world's Communist parties have also contributed towards focussing new interest on the position of the individual in Communist societies. In fact, the efforts that are being made to emphasize the humanistic aspects of Marxism seem to have been spurred, in part, by the desire of Marxist theoreticians to create a doctrinal basis that would preclude a revival of Stalinistic practices. However, a recasting of Marxism-Leninism within its existing doctrinal framework seems hardly possible in view of the prevalence in Marxist-Leninist theory of so-called "empty areas," which are particularly conspicuous in the field of ethics. (In Lenin's works there is not a single reference to the problem of alienation.) The need for filling these "empty areas" with a properly constructed ethical system that would take into consideration the inherent rights of the individual has repeatedly been stressed by participants in the current debates.[49]

Marxist theoreticians in the non-Communist countries are particularly eager to eliminate the "empty areas" by providing, in the form of socialist humanism, an acceptable alternative to rigid Marxist orthodoxy. They realize, indeed, that traditional Communist disregard for the individual and his problems is not likely to attract the new generation of intellectuals exposed to the seductive influence of the various existentialist schools. Moreover, in Western countries, such as France and Italy, where the Communists are now busy trying to revive "popular fronts," the reformulation of Marxism along socialist-humanist lines is regarded as a means of making communism more acceptable to non-Communist left-wingers. This was what Althusser had in mind when he said that the reincorporation of the socialist-humanist theme in Marxist doctrine should be "reassuring enough and attractive enough to make possible a dialogue between Communists and socialists." [50]

How reassuring and attractive this doctrinal recasting and the concomitant development of Marxist ethics will be must remain a matter of speculation. But while the practical results of the great debate on socialist humanism are not predictable, it would be a grave error to underestimate the significance of the efforts to soften the rigidity of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine. To shift the emphasis from revolution to evolution, from institutionalized terror to an institutionalized respect for the dignity of the individual, from the expectation of universal conflagration to peaceful coexistence, from Lenin to the young—not the old—Marx, from an uncompromising Manicheism to a more imaginative and flexible interpretation of reality, is after all no mean undertaking. Given the nature of the Communist states and parties, there is, of course, no guarantee that the debates on socialist humanism, alienation, and individual freedom will be allowed to continue. But as long as they do, they deserve the greatest attention. For even though the discussions may not yield positive results, they may at least contribute to a clarification of the many doctrinal obscurities rooted in what George Lukacs has gently and somewhat melancholically described as "the fairly subtle and complex considerations of the founding fathers." [51]

[49] *Kommunist,* No. 1, 1965.

[50] *Loc. cit.*

[51] *Nuovi Argomenti,* Nos. 57-58, 1962.

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Czechoslovakia's New Economic Model

EDITORS' NOTE: In the past two years Czechoslovakia has moved to the forefront of the often faltering but never abandoned quest for social reform and political liberalization in Communist Eastern Europe. Quite typically, the latest advances along this road in Czechoslovakia have grown out of a surrender to reality—that is, to an economic crisis which has compelled an unhappy, conservative Communist regime to recognize that the system of centralized command planning, forced upon the country by the Soviets after the coup of 1948, was economically inefficient and politically no longer sustainable. The effectuation of economic change required wider freedom of discussion, and this in turn soon gave birth not only to a general political amelioration and intellectual rejuvenation, but also to a highly imaginative plan for economic reform. In the first of the following two articles, Professor Shaffer outlines the background of the New Economic Model and pinpoints the principal features and goals of the reform. In the second, Professor Holesovsky discusses the prospects for the plan and weighs the hopes that have attended it.

Out of Stalinism

By Harry G. Shaffer

After the Communist takeover in 1948, Czechoslovakia's political and economic system was patterned on that of the Soviets and its government became as Stalinist as any in the Soviet bloc. Political and cultural control by the Stalinist party apparatus was complete; five-year plans gave priority to heavy industry at the expense of the agricultural and the consumer goods sectors; and central planning authorities left few economic details to be decided at lower echelons of the economic machinery.

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Even after Khrushchev's denunciation of Stalin at the 20th CPSU Congress in 1956, Czechoslovak party leaders embarked upon the Kremlin-ordained course of destalinization with utmost reluctance and with correspondingly little effect. Long after the body of Stalin had been removed from its place of honor in the Lenin Mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square, and long after other Soviet bloc countries had demolished the outward vestiges of the personality cult, Stalin's 50-foot statue continued to tower over Czechoslovakia's capital. It was not removed until October 1962.

It is true that throughout the 1950's the centralized Czechoslovak command economy experienced considerable growth—largely because of the forced expansion of heavy industry.[1] Yet it is questionable whether even this specious form of economic growth, achieved by sacrificing quality of production and consumer interests, took place because or in spite of the centralized planning apparatus. In any case, the growth rate of Czechoslovakia's industrial output and national income, averaging about 11 and 7 percent respectively between 1957 and 1960, began to drop in the 1960's; both were negative in 1963.[2]

A Background of Economic Ills

Of all the Communist countries, Czechoslovakia has had the longest tradition of capitalist democracy, and it entered the era of "dictatorship of the proletariat" at a considerably higher stage of industrialization than any of the others.[3] Yet in 1963 Czechoslovakia became the only industrialized country in the entire world to register a decrease in industrial output, national income and real wages.

In addition, the goods that were produced were of such inferior quality that the value of rejects reached 1.5 billion Kcs in 1963;[4] during the first seven months of 1964 defects in industrial projects cost the country 365 million Kcs.[5] So serious has this problem become that Czechoslovak observers openly admit that "quality has become the foremost concern of the party and the economic authorities."[6] Newspaper reports radio broadcasts, countless complaints from dissatisfied customers and official statements testify to the fact that the difficulties in quality control persist. In February 1964, for instance, show windows in the East Bohemian town of Hradec Kralove displayed in "one of the most effective forms of the struggle against rejects . . . an electric shaver which did not shave, an iron which did not iron, a cooker which did not cook, and pen knives which did not cut."[7] In 1964, too, a shoe factory in Slovakia turned out shoes whose soles fell off after only a few days of wear, although the shoes retailed for 105 crowns a pair.[8] Defective coolers used in agricultural cooperatives caused milk losses "amounting to hundreds of thousands of liters every month."[9] And the Elektrosvit factory in Nove Zamky, Slovakia, which had been granted the "Red Flag" award "in recognition of its splendid results in the fourth quarter of 1963, "the next year sent 500 refrigerators to Brno, all of which, on close inspection, proved to be defective.[10]

As almost everywhere in the Communist world, concentration on capital goods production brought in its wake a great housing shortage, especially in the industrial centers. In Czechoslovakia, almost one third of all families are reported to have less than eight square meters (about 80 square feet) of floor space available per person,[11] and a poll of 1,800 young couples in the 20-23 year age group, taken in several large cities, revealed that 60 percent of

[1] Official Czechoslovak sources give the 1963 National Income in *current prices* as 172,605 million Kcs (Czechoslovak crowns), as compared with 59,087 million Kcs in 1948. *Statisticke prehledy* (Prague), No. 2, 1964, p. 68 ff.

[2] *Hospodarske noviny* (Prague), No. 9, 1964, p. 3.

[3] Industry, including construction, accounted for 65.7 percent of the Czechoslovak national income in 1948; agriculture for 22.1 percent. According to official figures, these percentages had changed to 75.1 and 13.8 percent respectively by 1963. *Statisticke prehledy,* No. 2, 1964, p. 68 ff.

[4] *Pravda* (Bratislava), Feb. 10, 1964. At the official exchange rate, $1 equals 7.2 Kcs. However, the present tourist exchange rate is 16.08 Kcs for $1 (*Ceteka,* Jan. 6, 1965), and Czechoslovak tourists now can purchase up to $100 at an exchange rate of 36 Kcs per dollar (Radio Kosice, March 19, 1965).

[5] Eric Bourne, *Christian Science Monitor* (Boston), Aug. 3, 1964.

[6] Adolf Rostlapil, *Hospodarske noviny,* Aug. 21, 1964.

[7] Radio Prague, Feb. 21, 1964.

[8] Radio Bratislava, July 29, 1964.

[9] Radio Bratislava, Apr. 20, 1964.

[10] The award was announced by Radio Bratislava, March 7, 1964; the faulty shipment *at precisely the same time* by Radio Prague.

[11] Deputy Zdenka Dohnalova addressing the Czechoslovak Assembly on February 26, 1964. *Ceteka,* Feb. 26, 1964.

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the newly-weds live with the parents of one of the spouses.[12]

The supplies of some food items (especially meat and meat products) improved considerably in the early months of 1964, eliminating some of the previous shortages, but many other consumer goods such as beer, mineral water, canned condensed milk, transistor radios, silicon raincoats, and some electrical appliances failed to meet demand.[13] A Czechoslovak writer vividly depicted the trials and tribulations of the Czechoslovak consumer in the Prague literary journal, *Literarni noviny:*

I fear becoming so used to daily calamities that I will consider it an unusual and happy occasion when there are available in places where they should be batteries, transistors, buttermilk, red beets, upholstered chairs, white lead for paint, reserved train tickets, nylon shirts, fountain pen refills and recording tape. . . .[14]

While there is a pronounced shortage of many consumer goods, the economy continues to produce many "unmarketable" commodities. In 1963, total inventories increased by 7 billion Kcs,[15] and the total value of unsalable inventories is estimated to approximate one fourth of the country's national income.[16]

To alleviate such discrepancies, the regime changed prices of consumer goods several times in 1964, raising the prices of goods in short supply and lowering the prices of products that were not taken off the market in sufficient quantities to clear the shelves. Since price increases of some goods were at least partially offset by price decreases of others, it would be impossible, without statistical computation, to evaluate the overall effect on the Czechoslovak consumer.[17] However, a series of drastic changes decreed early in 1964 provided a definite indication that living standards in Czechoslovakia (although generally considered still the highest in the Communist world) left much to be desired. In an unusual radio and television appearance on February 7, Premier Jozef Lenart announced an upward "adjustment" of rents, hitherto subsidized by the state, "to cover approximately the costs of operation, particularly maintenance and repairs";[18] the imposition of a progressive tax on pensions of more than 700 Kcs per month; the introduction of small charges for drugs and some school supplies heretofore given out free of charge; and an increase in the prices of formerly subsidized meals for workers served in factory cafeterias.

These measures are a part of the effort of the regime to make the country live within its means; they are, moreover, an expression of the awareness that artificially maintained low prices (or high incomes) can lead to shortages and disproportions without raising overall living standards. As one Czechoslovak commentator put it:

[12] *Ceteka,* June 2, 1964.
[13] Radio Bratislava, July 30, 1964.

„Vadné zboží nevyměňuji, to bych celý den nedělal nic jiného." Neprakta

"I do not exchange defective products. Otherwise, I wouldn't be doing anything else all day."

—From Dikobraz (Prague), March 18, 1965.

[14] Reported by Ernest B. Furgurson in the *Baltimore Sun* of May 29, 1964.
[15] *Nova mysl* (Prague), No. 3, 1964.
[16] *Hospodarske noviny,* No. 12, 1964.
[17] For the two-year period from 1961 to 1963, living costs rose more rapidly than money wages, so that *real* wages experienced a slight decline. See *Statisticka rocenka CSSR,* 1964, Prague, 1964, p. 41.
[18] Radio Prague, Feb. 14, 1964.

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We must take into consideration the old, well-known truth that we can only parcel out what there is to be parcelled out. . . . Even the best possible government cannot distribute what it does not have.[19]

In addition to all its other economic woes, Czechoslovakia has been suffering from a severe labor shortage. Early in 1963, in fact, the regime termed it the underlying reason for the abandonment of the 1961-65 plan.[20] By late summer 1964, there were at least 50,000 job vacancies in a country whose population numbers around 14 million.[21]

In an effort to combat the labor shortage, the government last year decided to import a few thousand badly needed coal miners from Poland and to reintroduce small-scale private enterprise, primarily in the service trades, to tap the two million pensioners, the unemployed housewives and those members of the present labor force who are willing to engage in after-hours work. The importation of foreign workers has of course the disadvantage of increasing the number of consumers as it increases the number of producers, and it has therefore not been attempted on a large scale in Czechoslovakia. At the same time, the opening of certain service trades to private enterprise has met with rather limited success. Deterred by red tape, high license fees and the requirement to submit to supervision by a socialist enterprise, very few individuals in Czechoslovakia seem to have taken advantage of the opportunity so far, although the first partial re-privatization decree has been on the books for more than a year. In any case, since Czechoslovakia already has one of the world's highest labor-participation rates, efforts directed at a *more effective* utilization of the *present* labor force appear more promising. Towards this end, the government in 1964 started shutting down all unprofitable productive capacity; introduced special financial incentives to lure workers into such sectors as agriculture, mining and building, where the labor shortage is especially pronounced; reduced by more than 37,000 the country's administrative apparatus;[22] and offered special premiums and awards to collectives, groups of workers and even individuals who succeed in reducing the working force of an economic unit while still fulfilling the output quotas.

The Search for a Cure

The economy of any country may be adversely affected by events that lie beyond the control of the government. At least two such events (a political crisis and a natural calamity) left their imprint on Czechoslovakia in the early 1960's. First, the Sino-Soviet split resulted in a sharp and sudden drop of Czechoslovakia's trade with China, depriving the former of a supplier of food and raw materials and a not-too-demanding customer of machinery and equipment.[23] Secondly, the severe drought of 1962 played a major role in the agricultural debacle of that year, which, compounded by the savage 1962-63 winter that temporarily interrupted transportation, was bound to leave its mark on industrial production in 1963.

Yet, however damaging these events may have been, Czechoslovak officials have not blamed them exclusively for the difficulties that have beset the economy. They have noted instead many symptoms of a lingering disease and they have applied, in piecemeal fashion, spot

[19] J. Svoboda in *Pravda*, Feb. 10, 1964.
[20] *Ceteka*, Feb. 11, 1963.
[21] Eric Bourne in *Christian Science Monitor*, Aug. 3, 1964.

[22] *Rude pravo* (Prague), Oct. 31, 1964.
[23] While Czechoslovakia's trade with China dropped severely, her total trade with foreign countries has increased. The official statistical yearbook gives the following figures:

Czechoslovak Trade with Communist China
(in millions of Kcs, FOB border)

Year	*Exports*	*Imports*
1960	787	672
1961	245	302
1962	86	184
1963	67	209

Source: *Statisticka rocenka CSSR* 1964, Prague, 1964, p. 368.

Czechoslovak Trade with Foreign Countries
(in millions of Kcs, FOB border)

Year	*Exports*	*Imports*
1960	13,982	13,072
1961	14,733	14,570
1962	15,793	14,904
1963	17,723	15,554

Source: *Ibid.*, p. 365.

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remedies to provide temporary relief. Most economists, however, and even key party officials soon agreed that a radical cure was needed to restore the economy to a healthy condition.

Even though Czechoslovakia's economic problems are manifold, the economists are convinced that one single systemic defect—*detailed economic planning from the center*—is at the root of the trouble, and that only the elimination of the existing planning structure will provide the fundamental cure. They advocate, therefore, a decentralization of economic decision-making, emphasis on material incentives and strong reliance on the forces of supply and demand as the principal measures necessary for a successful recovery.

Attempts to institute such reform are not entirely new in Czechoslovakia's post-1948 history. As far back as 1957, the party Central Committee had decided that central management of "fundamental matters" ought to be combined with extended rights and responsibilities of plant managers in "current matters" and that more emphasis should be placed on material incentives.[24] On April 1, 1958, certain economic reforms were in fact, introduced; these, however, are recognized today as "halfhearted" and "rather shy steps in the direction of economically sound management of the economy" [25] and as an ineffective "compromise solution." [26]

When the 1961 plan was underfulfilled, the party first placed the blame on the decentralization measures of the 1958 reforms and, reversing its former positions, asked for the "strengthening of central management." [27] But subsequently, the 12th Czechoslovak Party Congress (December 1962) decided that henceforth all proposed economic measures must be carefully examined and subjected to public discussion. Thus an atmosphere was created in which progressive thought could flourish, allowing the debate to swing once again in the direction of greater economic decentralization. For the following two years, first timidly and then ever more frankly, the shortcomings of the prevailing system of management and planning were discussed and analyzed, and eventually there emerged a plan for a "New Economic Model."

Winds of Reason

In February 1963, Radoslav Selucky, a young Leningrad-trained economist, launched the first major attack against the "cult of the plan." [28] He soon found rapidly spreading support among reform-minded intellectuals. Although the opposition of the conservative officialdom, including party leader Antonin Novotny, remained strong, a conference of leading Czechoslovak economists in October 1963 openly discussed the country's economic ills and made strong recommendations for abandonment of the rigid system of centralized planning, urging in its stead increased dependence on market forces in economic management. By the year's end the discussion had spread from scientific conferences and technical journals to daily newspapers and cultural and political periodicals. It soon became apparent that those who advocated a "fundamental change" in the system were gradually gaining the upper hand.

In the summer of 1964, the editors of *Pravnik* (the publication of the Law Institute of the Czechoslovak Academy of Sciences) sent a questionnaire to leading economists and lawyers asking them for their views on the "proper" system of management of the national economy. Not one single voice among those who replied defended the system of central planning under which, ever since 1948, the Czechoslovak regime had tried to determine everything from the output of hydroelectric power and steel to the production of toothpaste, ice cream and engineering graduates.[29] By 1965, university professors no longer hesitated to criticize publicly the "Stalinist model" of economic centralism and to denounce as a mistake the copying of the pre-Khrushchev Soviet system of management in a highly developed country like Czechoslovakia.[30]

Arguments in many respects similar to those

[24] *Rude pravo,* Oct. 18, 1957.

[25] *Pravda,* Jan. 27, 1964, and *Pravnik* (Prague), No. 4, April 1964.

[26] *Rude pravo,* Dec. 23, 1964. For a more detailed discussion of the 1958 reforms see, for instance, Alec Nove's section on "The Czech and Polish Models," in his *The Soviet Economy,* New York, Praeger, 1961, pp. 242-45.

[27] *Rude pravo,* Aug. 14, 1962.

[28] *Kulturni tvorba* (Prague), Feb. 7, 1963.

[29] See *Pravnik,* No. 6, June, and No. 7, July 1964.

[30] See, for instance, Ladislav Tomasek, Lecturer at the Prague party college, in *Planovane hospodarstvi,* No. 2, 1965, and Benedikt Korda, holder of the Chair for Mathematical Methods at the Prague Higher School of Economics, in *Planovane hospodarstvi,* No. 1, 1965.

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propounded in the USSR by Yevsei G. Liberman[31] have been advanced in speech after speech and in article after article by the Czechoslovak reformers. As long as quantitative output is ordained from above and remains the primary achievement indicator, the argument goes, is it any wonder that managers and workers alike tend to disregard product quality and consumer demand, "stubbornly continuing . . . to produce useless goods?"[32] Is it any wonder that productive capacity is concealed to secure easily attainable targets; that it often becomes "more important to fake the fulfillment of a task than to make a real effort to achieve socially desirable results";[33] that machinery and equipment (allocated free of charge by the state) are hoarded irrespective of immediate usefulness; and that technical innovation is considered an unwise risk which, if successful, would only bring higher output quotas for the subsequent year? All in all, the economists believe, the prevailing system of management has failed to correlate the interests of individual enterprises and their employees with those of society.[34]

Since quantitative output has proved to be inadequate as an index of efficiency, planners in several Communist countries of Eastern Europe have been experimenting with different success indicators. Expedients, such as bonuses paid for increasing labor productivity, for introducing innovations, for improving quality and for saving on scarce inputs have been tested, but all of these measures have merely further complicated the already cumbersome planning apparatus. (In Czechoslovakia, not long ago, the case of a director was reported who had to fulfill 17 indices to quality for a bonus.[35]) Today, the progressive economists are convinced that there is only one index that would suitably measure performance and at the same time coordinate the interests of workers and directors with those of society at large: profit.

If profit is to perform these functions, enterprises must be free to seek it without interference from centralized controls over details of production. They must be allowed to decide for themselves what goods to produce and where to sell them, what inputs to use and where to purchase them, how many workers to hire and how much to pay them, what share of total net profits to distribute among employees and what share to set aside for investments intended to increase future income. To the extent to which enterprises are not free to make such decisions, to that extent profit loses its value as a meaningful measuring rod of enterprise efficiency and to that extent also the profit motive is weakened as an effective incentive towards efficient and socially desirable performance. Hence, almost by definition, the utilization of profit and of the profit motive must go hand in hand with economic decentralization and with a considerable extension of the influence of market forces over economic decision-making.

The blame for the lack of success of the 1958 decentralization measures in Czechoslovakia is now placed primarily on the failure to make profit the basic index and to link the material interest of the enterprise with it.[36] This shortcoming of the 1958 reform (apparently resulting from an ideological aversion to what then was held to be too "capitalistic" an approach) is not to be repeated in the mid-1960's. Although the details of the proposed changes have been sharply debated, Czechoslovak reformers are in general agreement that profit and the profit motive must be given a meaningful place within the framework of the socialist economy. It is also generally understood that the proposed reform will entail a diminution of the central planning organs' economic powers and a simultaneous transfer of such powers to the lower echelons in the productive process and, in the final analysis, to the consumer.

The New Economic Model

On October 17, 1964, *Rude pravo* published in a 12,000 word article the "Draft Principles for the Perfection of the System of Planned Management of the National Economy." The document had been approved in September by the Presidium of the Communist Party Central Committee and generally conforms in its thrust to the ideas publicized during previous months

[31] For a discussion of Liberman's proposals see, for example, Harry G. Shaffer, "What Price Economic Reforms? Ills and Remedies," *Problems of Communism,* May-June 1963, pp. 18-26.
[32] *Pravnik,* No. 4, April 1964.
[33] *Kulturny zivot* (Bratislava), No. 48, Nov. 28, 1964.
[34] *Rude pravo,* Oct. 17, 1964.
[35] *Kulturny zivot,* No. 48, Nov. 28, 1964.
[36] See, for instance, *Pravnik,* No. 4, April 1964, and *Rude pravo,* Dec. 23, 1964.

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by a number of economists and in particular by Ota Sik, head of the Economic Institute of the Academy of Sciences and member of the party Central Committee.[37] In essence, the "Draft Principles" envisage the scrapping of detailed economic planning from the center and propose to substitute for it the mechanism of a market economy operating within the framework of a broad overall social plan.

After the Presidium's preliminary approval, the "Draft Principles" were returned to the Central Committee's Economic Commission for further study. To the surprise of some observers who expected that the dogmatists within the party would assert at that stage their opposition to the proposals, the Commission proposed no alterations beyond emphasizing the need for a more consistent elaboration of questions related to prices, levies, credits and the status of the central organs. The Central Committee plenum, held, after one postponement, at the end of January 1965, then followed suit by issuing a resolution that approved the New Economic Model without substantial change.[38]

After proclaiming that the existing system of detailed planning at the center had "fulfilled its historic mission" (the "Draft Principles" had characterized it as "unwieldy, bureaucratic, and obsolete"), the CC resolution proceeded to outline the new approach to economic planning and management as follows.

Greater Authority for Enterprises. The function of central economic planners is to be reduced to the laying down of "the basic proportions of production . . . and distribution." Central planning bodies and central control agencies are to concentrate their efforts on broad, long-term planning; on such important, fundamental questions as price, wage and incentive policies, and the balanced economic development of individual regions; and on the control of situations presenting "the gravest danger" of "antisocial trends" (such as, presumably, could arise if large production units were left free to exploit their monopoly status without restrictions from above). The actual management and initiative in the productive process is to be left "as much as possible" to the basic economic units or their joint organizations. Enterprises, in other words, will be free to decide by themselves or in conjunction with other enterprises all economic details within the limits of the broad outlines laid down at the center.

Profits. From their total revenues, or "gross income," enterprises are to defray direct costs of production (including expenditures for raw materials, parts, transportation, and interest on bank loans) and their "obligations to society" (*i.e.*, interest and installment payments on state investments in the enterprise and contributions to the state budget). The remainder is then to be used by the enterprise for distribution among workers and managerial personnel and for investments in the enterprise itself to enhance future income.[39]

From the part of enterprise income set aside for the remuneration of employees, basic wages will be paid out first in accordance with the overall wage policy laid down by the central planning authorities. The rest, under a kind of profit-sharing system, will be distributed among workers (and managers) at the discretion of the economic unit, presumably in the form of incentive payments and bonuses for especially deserving employees. In regard to basic wages, the plan calls for the discontinuation of leveling policies, so that henceforth acquisition of greater skills and preparation and training for more important and more responsible positions should be more adequately rewarded. In this manner, a worker's income is to be related to his own qualifications and performance as well as to the economic achievements of his "intra-enterprise unit" [40] and of his enterprise as a whole. Since

[37] See, *Zemedelske noviny* (Prague), Feb. 1, 1964, and *Nova mysl* (Prague), October 1964.

[38] See, "Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia on the Main Trends of the Perfection of Planned Management of the National Economy and on Party Work," *Rude pravo*, Jan. 30, 1965. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all quotes and conclusions in this section are drawn from the resolution.

[39] Enterprises will be free to use a part of the profits for "collective consumption" (such as the building of recreation centers for employees), but since this type of consumption, formerly so much encouraged, does not seem to provide the same motivating forces as enhanced individual incomes, it is apparently being de-emphasized at present.

[40] These so far undefined "intra-enterprise units" appear to be modeled after the "economic units" of Yugoslavia, where attempts have been made to determine the income of economic units within large enterprises and to tie workers' incomes to the financial achievements of these units. Since in large enterprises one individual worker is too small a particle to influence the achievements of his enterprise, it is believed that incentive would be enhanced if workers' incomes were tied to the accomplishments of the departments in which they work, rather than to the entire enterprise.

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enterprise profitability is assumed to result from both efficiency in production (low production costs) and concentration on quality and assortment reflective of consumer demand (salability), a direct link is thus presumably established between the interests of individual workers, economic enterprises, and society at large.

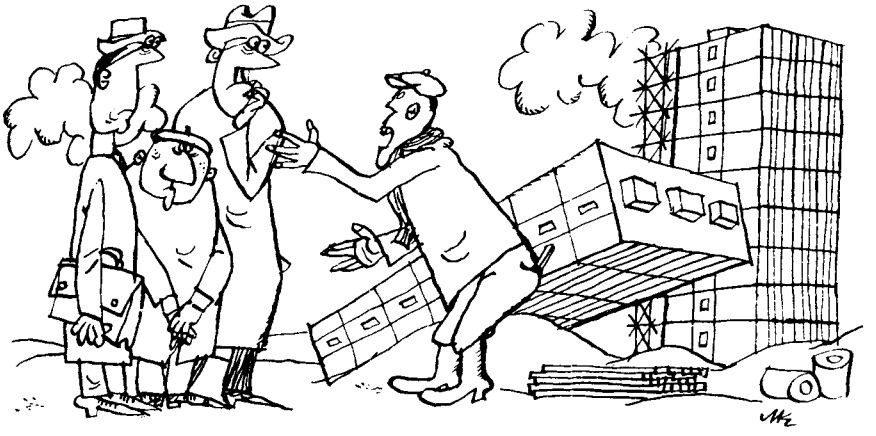
Investment. In the sphere of investment, too, the central organs are to lay down only the overall policy: they are to decide upon "the basic orientation of investment policy, the big development programs, and the conditions and criteria for the effectiveness of sector investments." Otherwise, guided by considerations of profitability, enterprises will be responsible for their own investments. They will finance them out of their own funds or through bank loans. Contrary to prevailing practice, all debts will have to be repaid with interest, out of future earnings.

Prices. If the market mechanism (rather than an all-wise planner) is to allocate resources so as to meet consumer demand, arbitrarily set prices must be replaced by prices which reflect relative scarcity. The party leadership, however, is unwilling to let prices fluctuate freely, in accordance with the market forces of supply and demand. The new economic model calls therefore for three types of prices: fixed, "limited," and free. Raw materials and all basic products such as coal, electricity, steel, wheat, etc., will carry fixed prices set at the center, but, similar to the price reforms instituted in East Germany in April and July 1964, costs and demand are to be given due consideration and prices are to be changed whenever changed conditions indicate the necessity for such action. "Limited" prices, apparently applicable to a wide variety of commodities, will be permitted to fluctuate within prescribed limits. Fee prices, affecting initially only a small sector of the consumer goods industry, will be left to respond, without limitation, to the forces of supply and demand.

Enterprise Combinations. Structurally, the new economic model provides for horizontal integration of enterprises through the formation of "trusts" and for vertical integration via "concerns" [41] While the offices of the trusts and concerns will clearly represent the highest agency still directly concerned with the financial management enterprises, a precise delimitation of authority within the integrated units remains to be defined.

Foreign Trade. The foreign trade mechanism is also to be "liberalized." To motivate domestic enterprises to sell abroad, they are to have the right to keep a part of the foreign currencies they have earned. On the other hand, they will also be relatively free to purchase their supplies abroad if foreign producers can deliver them more cheaply than domestic suppliers.

[41] Horizontal integration refers to the uniting into one organization of a number of independent enterprises operating at the same phase of production (mining, manufacturing) and usually in the same line of business; vertical integration refers to the administrative concentration of enterprises functioning at several or all phases of production—from raw material extraction to the production of finished goods and often even including marketing organizations charged with distributing the commodity.



„Berte to tak, soudruzi, že chybama se učíme . . ."

M. Kratochvíl

"Look at it this way, comrades, we learn by our mistakes . . . ."

—*From Dikobraz (Prague), June 17, 1965.*

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Schedule of Implementation. The reformers have cautioned again and again that the major changes they advocate could not be put into effect at once. While the "Draft Principles" clearly stated that "the Central Committee can no longer wait" to *start* the introduction of the new measures, there is clear cognizance that the new system must be introduced gradually. The year 1965 is to be a period of experimentation during which some of the principles of the reform are to be tested in selected enterprises. In 1966, the "basic principles of the new system" are to be implemented in the "main branches" of the economy, even if details will still remain to be worked out later.[42]

Isolated experiments with economic decentralization involving the utilization of profit and of the profit motive were actually started early in 1964. In January 1965, the testing went into full swing. During the first half of the month, selected enterprises in the consumer goods industries began to experiment with entirely uncontrolled prices,[43] and it was announced that a freer system of prices (limited prices in state-owned factories, free prices in cooperative enterprises) would be tested in an entire production sector: the furniture industry.[44]

Ideological Justification. In the Communist world outlook, Marx is not merely the John Locke and the Adam Smith of socialist political and economic thought; he is viewed more in the way in which Christ is looked upon by Christianity. Hence, to be acceptable, such far-reaching changes in the system of planning and management as are incorporated in the New Economic Model first had to be justified in terms of Marxist ideology. The economic reformers have therefore consistently denied that they were "revisionists," and they refer to their experiments with various aspects of a market economy as "creative Marxism." In a hundred different ways during the past two years they have expounded the view that "in the process of the regeneration of creative Marxist thinking . . . economic theory has gradually disposed of the supposition that socialism will always continue operating under one and the same model of management," [45] and they have attacked as "ideological prejudice" the notion that socialist production cannot be regulated by the market.[46] Finally, since planning has always been held to be the backbone of an economy structured along Marxist-Leninist lines, they keep insisting that the proposed new system "will not mean less planning but better planning" [47] and that "the effectiveness of central management will be increased by its being relieved of the task of making decisions in questions which, by their very nature, should be reserved for the enterprises. . . ." [48]

Conclusion

The system of detailed economic planning from the center, which may have certain merits if used to speed up the development of a backward country, has been imposed for a decade-and-a-half upon Czechoslovakia, the industrially most advanced state in Eastern Europe. Now, at long last, economic necessity and a powerful intellectual effort by a new breed of Communist-trained economists have, at least for the time being, convinced a somewhat reluctant party leadership that complete economic control from the center is not necessarily the epitome of economic wisdom. But how well the reformers will succeed when their New Economic Model is put to the test of life is a wide open question. Few will doubt that there are very serious difficulties ahead, stemming partly from imperfections of the new scheme dictated by the necessity of political compromise, and partly from the necessarily slow pace of changing the practices and overcoming the attitudes established during long years of economic controls from the top.

To mention just a few of the more obvious problems: The party leadership will surely not be induced for some time to come to go very far in releasing price formation from central control. To the extent that prices will remain centrally determined, they will reflect, in some measure at least, the preferences of the planners rather than those of the consumers; and to that same extent, profit will fail to function as a fully meaningful measure of economic efficiency. Sim-

[42] *Planovane hospodarstvi* (Prague), No. 2, February 1965.
[43] *Rude pravo,* Jan. 11, 1965.
[44] *Ceteka,* Jan. 4, 1965.
[45] *Politicka ekonomie,* No. 5, 1964.
[46] Quoted and discussed in *Rinascita* (Rome weekly of the Communist Party of Italy), Nov. 21, 1964. See also *Zemedelske noviny,* Oct. 7, 1964.
[47] The "Draft Principles," *op. cit.*
[48] Professor Stefan Luby, *Pravnik,* No. 7, July 1964.

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ilar defects will result if a policy of rigid wage control from the center is maintained. Other problems are likely to arise in the wake of the prospective industrial amalgamations. It is true that these may help reduce costs of production in certain cases, but they will also tend to create monopolies which, under a reasonably free price system, would find it profitable to restrain production and maintain high prices. In other words, here is another possible inducement to the government to exercise price control.

One more problem must now be mentioned—one that may, indeed, turn out to be the most serious the economists and the government will face: the shortage of trained and experienced and enterprising managerial personnel. During fifteen years of detailed economic planning from the center, the regime had little use for the skilled managerial resources the country had developed prior to 1948, nor did it see any need to train new ones. Apart from the party's established personnel policy, which rewarded political conformity and neglected skill and ability, the highly centralized system of detailed planning could virtually dispense with managers in the true meaning of the word. What it needed, and what it promoted, was political bureaucrats who could take orders and then gladly pass them on. But the New Economic Model is predicated on skillful and *enterprising* management, in other words, on enterprise directors who not only are adequately trained, but who also have a personal stake in the fulfilment of their task; in short, men who can act as entrepreneurs in the best sense of the word. Unfortunately, the government's effort to overcome the scarcity of managerial personnel by training more capable individuals for managerial positions is handicapped by the continuing requirement that, as Novotny phrased it in his last New Year's message, "capable and *politically conscious* individuals be appointed to leading posts."[49] Nevertheless, the trend appears to be in the direction of greater emphasis on qualifications and less emphasis on "political maturity."[50]

All this is not to say that the outlook for the New Economic Model is altogether bleak; with time many of the present difficulties could be overcome. The big question is whether the party leaders who still hold the reins of power will be willing to relax their grip sufficiently to permit the advantages of the proposed reforms to take full effect. Yet, whether it likes the new course or not, the regime itself is in large measure dependent on the reforms' success. The only alternative is a regression to the old system of management, which has proven inadequate, and further economic failures, which even a totalitarian Communist government can politically ill afford in Eastern Europe today. Viewed objectively then, the New Economic Model bears the promise of desirable ends to the party leadership itself; and to the country at large it opens up the possibility not only of material betterment, but also of a more humane and more democratic socialism. For everyone concerned, the stakes are clearly high.

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[49] *Ceteka,* Jan. 1, 1965. Emphasis mine.

[50] A party Central Committee resolution passed at the January 1965 Plenum provided that less capable individuals must not be given priority because of their party affiliation. (*Rude pravo,* Feb. 4, 1965.) The fact that such a resolution was passed is indicative of how matters of this nature must have been handled in the past.

On March 16, 1965, Radio Prague announced the establishment of a state-wide commission to study the means for raising the professional qualifications of leading economic executives. In the same broadcast, it was pointed out that in Poland and Yugoslavia the percentage of factory managers with a university education is three times as high as in Czechoslovakia, and that in United States plants with more than 500 employees it is seven times as high (78 percent).

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Problems and Prospects

By Vaclav Holesovsky

The promise of social and political relaxation that appears to be implied in the Czechoslovak "New Economic Model" calls for careful evaluation. "Success" of the reforms may clearly mean different things to different people, depending on the motivation of the critic and the criteria applied. It is necessary therefore to separate the economic and the political aspects of the plan. If one is concerned chiefly with the expansion of the spirit of free discussion that inspired the reformist movement, the achievement of "a more humane, and a more democratic socialism" (seen as a distinct possibility in the preceding article by Professor Harry Shaffer) would indeed be the measure of success. But if the point of departure is the October 1964 "Draft" and the January 1965 "Resolution," then a general *assainissement* of economic processes, elimination of the waste and irrationalities associated with command planning, and a smooth transition to planning-through-guidance would constitute success. These two possible effects of the reform may not necessarily go hand in hand. They should also be assayed separately, for different sets of facts and circumstances are relevant to one and the other.

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Will Society Benefit?

It may be taken as axiomatic that a transition to a "more humane and democratic" system means an end to the social atomization and organized amorphousness characteristic of societies ruled by totalitarian regimes. Positively formulated, such change amounts to a new articulation of society on the basis of organic interest groups that openly act out their conflicts and affinities. The spirit which originally animated the Czechoslovak debate of 1964 did contain the prospect of a development in this direction. The theme of a plurality of conflicting interests was brought up by some writers at the outset. The very notion of a market implies the autonomy of firms, some degree of consumers' ascendance, and, if a market for factors of production is also assumed, bargaining rights for labor. Moreover, a direct dialogue of buyers and sellers in a climate of contractual legality would reduce the

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state's administrative functions and substantially modify the relationship between state and society, at least in the economic sphere.

If the question is whether the existing totalitarian regime is willing, in Shaffer's words, to "relax [the] grip sufficiently to permit the advantages of the proposed reforms to take full effect" in the above sense, the obstacles which the reformers have already run into clearly show that such willingness does not exist. Simplifying drastically, the process of new social articulation is conceivable along two major alternative lines—or their combination: the emergence of the managerial bureaucracy "as a class" (a modern analogue to the bourgeois revolution against the *ancien régime*), and/or the organizational emancipation of labor. With respect to either alternative, the regime has acted defensively and preventively, as if the lingering social apathy in Czechoslovakia—which has not quite worn off since the defeat of the Hungarian Revolution—were not a sufficient guarantee of the *status quo*. Apparently, the party fears that the impending changes might dislocate social controls and stimulate fresh and politically dangerous aspirations among larger sections of the population.

However, only very feeble striving can so far be ascertained within the managerial stratum. While from a strictly economic point of view the proposed reforms have long been overdue, they are thus not "ripe" in a social sense. In the case of "ripe" reforms, adjustments in the institutional "superstructure" take place, as finishing touches, in response to developments at the socio-economic "base" that have rendered the existing legal and institutional arrangements incompatible with social reality. The present-day engineer-director, made and unmade by the state and party bureaucracy, intimidated by a sea of administrative regulations, skilled perhaps in the game of maximizing the right combination of bonus-bearing indicators, is a far cry from Burnham's class-conscious men of the managerial revolution. The Czechoslovak "managers" let the economists speak for the enlargement of managerial rights, and they may bring a little grist of petty complaints to the mill of the debate. But there is a strong resistance to any methods of management personnel selection—such as the use of competitive examinations and scientific testing—that might disturb the existing nexus of bureaucratic collusion and corruption, the mainstay of stability.[1]

The regime has undoubtedly more reason to be apprehensive about the reactions of labor, whose aspirations, unlike those of any other social group, are hardy and perennial. On the level of ideology, the debate itself eroded the old Communist dogma of labor's ownership of the means of production. A few influential writers even took the fateful step of denying that collective legal ownership, as defined by the Constitution, determines the real character of "production relations." This is the kind of heresy that opens the way to the argument that labor under the existing Communist regime remains dispossessed—and alienated, which has already been admitted and analyzed in a number of articles. As a practical extension of this spirit, some commentators began to propound the view that the trade unions ought to function as group-interest organizations rather than "transmission belts." The party, however, has kept its vigilance and let it be known that

the function of voluntary social organizations consists in the expression and promotion of partial interests which are in harmony with the interests of society as a whole. However, this harmony is not established once and for all; in every more significant concrete issue it has to be found anew. And in this respect voluntary social organizations have to make the greatest effort to promote partial interests within the limits of the interests of all society, on the basis of mass political work and under the leadership of the party.[2]

Assuming that the reform debate has had some effect in raising labor's expectations, the enterprise system based on the New Model is

[1] If the power structure of management were subjected to a sociological investigation, writes one reformer, "it would probably reveal the seriously detrimental character of a certain type of personal union of men who support each other; the power of the means by which criticism addressed against a man is thwarted; . . . the importance of a man's political weight built up purposefully over the years. It would show how all these 'ways and means' perpetuate the harmful conditions in the system of cadre selection and how they are apt to perpetuate /it/ past even the life of the traditional system of directing the national economy." Stanislav Vacha in *Hospodarske noviny* (Prague), No. 17, Apr. 30, 1965.

[2] *Hospodarske noviny*, No. 12, March 26, 1965.

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likely to be disappointing to the average worker; more, rather than less, party activism ("ideological work among the masses") is thus likely to follow in order to keep workers in line.

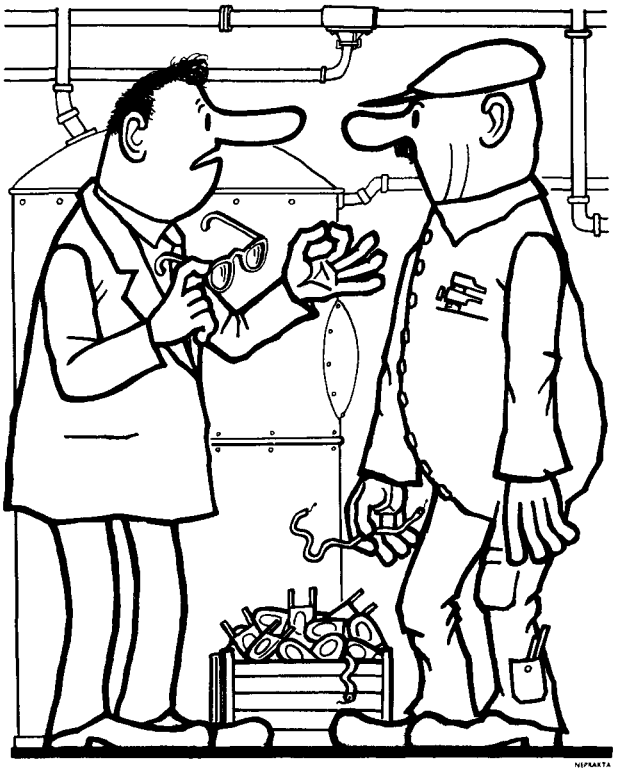
The reform scheme assigns to labor a most ambiguous role. With a variant of profit-sharing and with the slogan "Every enterprise must earn its own means for the payment of wages and rewards," the New Model introduces an important cooperative element without, however, the voluntary membership and democratic selection of management or trustees normally associated with production cooperatives. True, the reform scheme offers the worker the assurance of a guaranteed minimum wage, but since the upper portion of wage earnings will be dependent upon the financial success of the enterprise, the workers' profit-sharing turns out to be risk-sharing as well. Such mixing of entrepreneurial functions with labor interests is bound to create new frictions and malaise, especially since the new labor code, now in preparation, foresees continuing serious limitations on the free mobility of labor and the free play of wage differentials on the labor market. In the enterprises currently testing certain partial reform measures, new forms of labor compensation seem to have amounted mainly to a more efficient use of bonuses.

Moreover, the issue of unemployment is beginning to cause worry. With command planning and its incentives, enterprises tended to "hoard" labor as much as they "hoarded" capital goods. Under the New Model, any shift toward efficiency in management would be accompanied by dismissals and the attendant problems of transition to new jobs. But instead of facing the issue squarely, and openly introducing unemployment insurance as a measure affording flexibility in labor allocation, the draft labor code merely provides a semblance of formal protection against dismissals by requiring the consent of the trade union local. In any case, the reform will bring changes requiring new adjustments on the part of labor, and it may thus open new sources of militancy warranting the regime's watchfulness.

It may be said, in sum, that with the first steps toward implementation of the New Model, the spirit of social reconstruction that permeated last year's reform drive is being carefully neutralized by the regime. Morover, it now seems clear that an attempt is under way to convert the economic reform into another exercise in totalitarian social manipulation. This would explain, at least in part, the emergence of popular distrust, apathy and cynicism toward the reform.

Will the Economy Benefit?

The New Model need not of course emancipate Czechoslovakia from totalitarianism in order to have salutary effects upon the economy. Yet, even for this limited purpose a *certain* degree of lively social response—on the part of managerial personnel— is a condition of success. The problem of satisfactory management performance is less a matter of formal education and schooling, than of mentality, professional business experience and initiative in making complex economic and technical decisions—*i.e.*, attitudes which have not been allowed to thrive in Czechoslovakia for at least a quarter of a century. With this in mind, one Czech versifying



„Nechápete, že zlepšením kvality z toho uděláme nedostatkové zboží!"

"Do you not understand that by improving quality we shall start producing a scarce product!"

—*From* Dikobraz *(Prague), Jan 21, 1965.*

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economist composed a satire, paraphrasing Ovid's *Metamorphoses,* in which Jupiter struggles with problems created by his decision to transmute the economic system of a country very much like Czechoslovakia. He soon realizes that his main task will be to transform people:

> Ty, kteří pak všude se standartami chodí,
> ze nic nemohou, nesmějí a nechtějí, . . .
> změním v socialistické podnikatele svizné,
> kteří sami postrkujíce nejsou jen postrkovanými.[3]
>
> (Those who walk about with banners proclaiming
> "We cannot," "We must not," "We don't want to," . . .
> I shall change into socialist entrepreneurs of a lively breed,
> Who will rouse others rather than just be pushed around.)

It is unlikely that all managerial talent in Czechoslovakia is entirely extinct, but the tenacity of the present interlocking cliques within the state and party establishment dims the prospects for the type of personnel policy required by the New Model. The various new research projects on management problems, as well as the Committee for Scientific Management established last June, are of course useful, but they do not solve the main problem.

Besides the difficulties with management personnel, the reformers are facing serious obstacles of a more technical nature. For instance, the New Model requires new methods of information-gathering, both within the single enterprise and in the economy as a whole. Within the enterprise, the "khozraschet"[4] system of accounting was good enough for checking whether allotted funds were being spent for prescribed purposes, but it is insufficient for following costs and profitability by individual workshops, departments, or products. The governmental organs are doing their best to speed up the preparation of new forms of accounting which are to be introduced beginning next year. Adequate global statistical information, on the other hand, will depend not on an improved technique of data collection, which now seems to be satisfactory, but on the functioning of the economic model itself. As long as the New Model is not safely introduced and the old incentives and output-planning stay in force, enterprises have reason to cling to the ingrained practices of dissimulation and falsification which have vitiated the usefulness of so many statistics in the past. But reliable primary data are indispensable for meaningful forecasting projections, which are part of the proposed guidance-planning of the New Model.

In the sphere of law, the New Model requires a legal framework that would restore the predominance of voluntary contracts over administrative regulations. Here, too, work on new law drafts has been under way, but it is being hampered by the many unresolved questions connected with the reform, *e.g.,* the problem of liquidating inefficient and bankrupt enterprises. Still another open issue is the status of foreign trade enterprises. Since competitive prices of imported goods are expected to exert a stimulating effect upon domestic production, it is important to decide whether import and export enterprises will become independent profit-making units, or continue to function as state monopolies, or be affiliated with domestic enterprises. The problems raised by the New Model affect even such formal matters as the method of paying bills by enterprises. Nowadays, the domination of sellers in the economy finds its faithful reflection in the fact that the bank debits the account of the buying enterprise automatically on the initiative of the seller, before the buyer even has a chance to receive and inspect the delivered merchandise. Under the New Model, the weight is to shift decisively in favor of the buyers, and consequently all such technicalities also need revision.

The most promising aspect of the New Model, and one which can hardly fail to have salutary effects, is the reweaving of the torn fabric of direct supplier-customer relationships throughout the economy. Rational and flexible prices are no doubt an important element in market functioning. However, other factors are even more essential, such as a clear and unhampered flow of orders and offers; informative advertising; freedom to return faulty merchandise;

[3] *Ibid.,* No. 9, May 14, 1965.

[4] An abbreviation of *khoziaistvennyi reschet* (business calculation), the Soviet system of accounting rules emphasizing the financial counterpart of the firm's planned physical output targets.

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sales contracts enforceable in the courts; control of inventory levels through ordinary financial stimuli intrinsic to the enterprise, and so forth. The financial pressure of charges on invested capital is similarly important and apt to be beneficial for it should force enterprises to trim off superfluous items of their capital equipment. Indeed, this expectation is already receiving confirmation in the press. To cite an example:

Experimenting construction enterprises are beginning to get rid of excessive machinery. They do it inconspicuously and fast because they know that half a year from now all construction enterprises will pursue the same policy. And then it will be hard to find someone willing to take it.[5]

Quite clearly, the proposed changes in the nature of incentives can and do have important favorable effects upon the economy's efficiency.

One large proviso should be added to this examination of the brighter side of the reform's prospects. The favorable effects of all the reform measures, if and when they are enacted, will for some time to come be overshadowed by the after-effects of the old policies and the need to correct them. And since the corrective measures must address themselves above all to structural imbalances of macro-economic proportions, continuing centralized decisions—especially in the allocation of investment funds in the spheres of housing, transportation, obsolete consumer goods industries, chemicals and agriculture—seem unavoidable. What central planning spoiled, central planning has to correct, before a broader area can be allowed for the operation of market forces.

The really tantalizing question is to what extent and how fast the existing structure of the economy, deformed by the well-known biases in the regime's priorities, can be corrected, for in its present form it is bound to limit the freedom of decision of ever-so-well-intentioned reformers. It may be useful to recall in this connection how the Tsarist economic structure limited the economic options of the Bolsheviks in the 1920's. In the case of Czechoslovakia, the constraints imposed by the foreign-trade demand of the CEMA countries are perhaps the most conspicuous. During the past two years, for example, increasing reliance upon machinery exports was blamed for a complex of economic difficulties. Nevertheless, according to the most recent draft of the 1966-70 Plan, the role of machinery in foreign trade is to increase further.[6]

In the first part of this essay, the prospects for the New Model's success were examined from a maximalist point of view, *i.e.*, one that posits the desirability of a demise of the totalitarian system. Success in these terms would *ipso facto* mean failure of the reform from the point of view of the party leadership: by consenting to reform the old bankrupt planning system, the regime hopes to gain a new lease on life, not to abdicate.

Returning, then, to the broad social and political implications of the reform movement, how does it fit into the current process of ideological disintegration and intellectual ferment in Czechoslovakia? In brief, one can say that the Czechoslovak economic crisis and the collapse of the central planning system have had a more powerful and constructive and lasting effect upon the spirit and minds of the party intellectuals than the formal denunciation of the "cult of personality." The Czechoslovak economic debate of 1963-64 will remain a fascinating chapter in the post-Stalin history of the Soviet-bloc countries. In the course of the debate, rationality and plain "talking sense" invaded the pages of weeklies and of economic journals, which in itself is more than reform—it is revolutionary. The Czechoslovak economists may not be as brilliant as some Poles, or as mathematically sophisticated as some Russians, but they knew how to make their points forcefully and get the rationale of reform across. At their hands, the system of command planning received a drubbing such as it never received on the part of the polite and carefully objective critics in the West. However, a study of the obstacles confronting the reformers and of the countermoves made by the regime, as well as the example of post-1956 Poland, should warn against confident expectations of a straight-forward progress toward liberalization.

[5] *Hospodarske noviny,* No. 19, May 14, 1965.

[6] *Cf. Planovane hospodarstvi* (Prague), No. 6, 1965, p. 6.

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Communism in Iran

By Sepehr Zabih

An inquiry into the Iranian Communist movement may be addressed to several central themes. One could, for example, examine it as a case study of the evolution of the Communist doctrine of social and national revolution in colonial and semi-colonial countries, with a view to identifying the function of this doctrine as a purely theoretical concept and its role as an operational guide for native Communist parties. Such a study would probe into the elements of change and continuity in the Communist doctrine and the extent of their reflection in the traditional and revolutionary aspects of Soviet diplomacy in the Middle East. A different approach would emphasize rather the indigenous character of the movement and would investigate the interplay of traditional and modern social forces in order to determine the nature and scope of the Communist appeal and to identify qualities and tendencies in Iranian society which have facilitated or impeded the Communist cause. Similarly, competing ideologies, particularly nationalism, would be explored with a view to evaluating their reliability as a bulwark against communism.

The primary focus of this article is the second theme. The Iranian experience with communism's principal organizational expressions, particularly the Tudeh Party, will be analyzed for the purpose of ascertaining and verifying the nature and sources of the Communist ideology's appeal. To achieve this purpose within the limits of allotted space, an historical account of the movement during the period of its indigenous existence will be attempted, and various types of alienation which enhance susceptibility to the Communist appeal, as well as the processes of recruitment into and defection from the Communist movement, will be examined. Finally, some general conclusions will be advanced as to which aspects of the Communist ideology are most likely to affect support of the movement and, more particularly, its prospects

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in Iran. In order to identify the diverse elements in the Communist appeal and to ascertain the socio-political characteristics of the strata of society most susceptible to it, this study has utilized as far as possible the method of survey analysis based on bibliographical data concerning participants in the Communist movement in Iran and samples of party literature.

A Series of Transformations

As a political movement commanding extensive popular support, Iranian communism may be traced back to 1941, when the joint Anglo-Soviet occupation of Iran during World War II brought the overthrow of the authoritarian regime of Reza Shah. Both external and internal factors contributed to the emergence of a genuine Communist mass movement. Of the former, the most important was the physical presence of the Red Army in northern Iran, which underscored the return of Soviet influence after an absence of more than two decades. Internally, the principal factors were the legacy of Reza Shah, changes in social conditions over the preceding twenty years, and the new political environment created by the disintegration of the Iranian state.

As a result of the progress made toward modernization of the country during Reza Shah's regime, both the bourgeosie and labor had expanded considerably, but they had remained largely deprived of the opportunity to alter the pattern of political relationships in accordance with these changes.[1] The consequent grievances of these social groups against the deposed regime, coupled with the abrupt removal of restrictions on freedom of political activity, produced conditions favorable to the formation of radical political organizations.

The Communist movement took full advantage of this newfound freedom. Moreover, one of its chief initial handicaps—the Iranians' natural antipathy toward the Soviet Union as an occupying power and consequent sympathy for the Germans—gradually diminished as the war progressed. As a matter of fact, a considerable segment of the Communist movement's early recruits, organized in the Tudeh Party after January 1942, was actually drawn from among elements whose pro-German leanings had largely been a manifestation of their initial anti-British and anti-Soviet sentiments rather than of any ideological affinity for Nazism.[2]

Since its inception, the Iranian Communist movement has gone through several important phases reflecting the changing pattern of external and internal political factors. Up to 1945 and the crisis caused by the Soviet attempt to take over Azarbayjan and Moscow's demands for an oil concession, the Tudeh Party was the major organizational expression of the movement. From 1945 to 1946, this role shifted to the Azarbayjan Democratic Party and its Kurdish affiliate, which were in open rebellion against the central government, while the Tudeh Party continued to function as a leftist but fundamentally non-revolutionary front in the rest of the country.[3] Following the collapse of the Soviet-supported separatist rebellions in Azarbayjan and Kurdistan in 1946, the Tudeh Party again became the sole organizational arm of the Communist movement in Iran, operating openly until 1949 and clandestinely from then until 1953-54.

Doctrinally and organizationally, the movement assumed different characteristics in the course of these developments. During the first stage, the Tudeh was more a front than a tightly-organized party. A majority of its leadership cadres sprang from among members of the Erani circle, an early Iranian Marxist group that had been suppressed in 1937 (under an anti-Communist law enacted in 1931). Unlike the Persian Community Party, another early radical group which had originated in Baku in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution, the Erani circle represented by and large a genuine attempt by European-educated Iranian intellectuals to learn and teach Marxism. Its

[1] For a study of the scope and progress of modernization under Reza Shah, see Amin Banani, *The Modernization of Iran, 1921-1941* Stanford, Calif., Stanford University Press, 1961. According to Communist sources, the labor force alone increased from 300,000 in 1929 to 600,000 in 1941: see Iraj Eskandari, "Histoire du Parti Toudeh," *Moyen-Orient* (Paris), No. 5 (Nov. 1949), p. 7.

[2] Bozorg Alavi's *Kämpfendes Iran* (Berlin, 1955) is an example of Communist literature acknowledging this fact.

[3] For an account of this phase of Communist activity in Iran, see George Lenczowski, *Russia and the West in Iran: A Study in Big Power Rivalry,* Ithaca, N. Y., Cornell University Press, 1949.

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propaganda medium was *Donya*, a sophisticated journal edited by the circle's founder, Tagehi Erani, a Berlin-educated native of Tabriz. In the spring of 1937, fifty-three members of the group were arrested, tried, and sentenced to prison. Released from detention in 1941 under a general amnesty, most of them subsequently joined other Communist converts in organizing the Tudeh Party of Iran (TPI) in early 1942.[4]

As a front organization, the TPI initially embraced a number of professional groups, trade unions, farmers' associations, youth leagues, etc., loosely banded together under the banners of political freedom, anti-fascism, anti-imperialism and the like. Generally speaking, it approximated the type of left-wing nationalist and anti-Western political party which so often flourishes in poor and backward countries. As such, it was led largely by professional people, either formally trained or self-taught, a substantial proportion of them having been exposed to Western education or influence. Its basic aim was the conquest of national power, but more than one means of achieving this goal was contemplated.

By actively participating in the parliamentary elections of 1943-44, in which it scored a modest success, the TPI showed an initial preference for legitimate means of attaining power, at least up to 1945.[5] Thereafter it became closely identified with Soviet expansionary objectives in Iran, thereby damaging its claim to legitimacy and indigenousness. The party's failure to secure the grant of an oil concession to the Soviets, however, led Moscow to deprive the TPI of its position as the sole Soviet-supported revolutionary organization in Iran. Instead, the Soviets entrusted a larger role to the Azarbayjan Democratic Party, which absorbed the Tudeh's provincial branches, relegating the central TPI apparatus to a secondary and predominantly agitational role in the capital. Coincident with this shift, the movement as a whole temporarily abandoned parliamentary and legal methods of capturing power, but following the abrupt Soviet withdrawal of support from the Communist-created separatist regime in Azarbayjan in 1946, the TPI once again returned to legal methods. The turnabout in Soviet policy also led to a major split in the party which caused the loss of a large segment of its following among the intelligentsia and a general decline in the popular appeal of the movement. It did not even partially recover from this loss of popularity until late 1948.

The ideological schism manifested itself in a three-way split of the party ranks. Disillusioned by the Soviet abandonment of the Tudeh's cause but still loyal to Marxist-Leninist ideology, one dissident faction broke off to form the Socialist Tudeh League under Khalil Maleki; however, upon being denounced by the Soviets, the League dissolved itself and remained inactive until 1951, when it reappeared on the scene as a left-socialist third force.[6] Another small minority faction composed of younger Marxists set itself up as an independent center group vying with the main TPI for Moscow's endorsement as the sole genuine Communist organization for Iran. What was left of the TPI after these defections carried out a thorough self-examination which resulted in a decision to "renovate" the party as a more closely-knit Communist organization.

From this juncture in early 1947, the movement began to reassume a more pronounced revolutionary character, abandoning its previous efforts to broaden its popular base in favor of concentrating on the development of a small elite corps of militant, well-trained cadres recruited from among the skilled workers and intelligentsia. By 1949, when the TPI was officially outlawed, the transformation of its character was virtually complete, and the ban on its existence, in effect, helped to strengthen its new revolutionary militancy by putting its followers to a severe test of loyalty and thus purging the party of its less reliable members.

The legal phase of the TPI's turbulent existence was marked by major tactical and organizational changes which reflected both the social composition of the movement and the basis of

[4] Bozorg Alavi, *Panjaho-se Nafar* (The Fifty Three), Teheran, n.d.

[5] The party's parliamentary group numbered eight members, of whom all but one represented Soviet-occupied territories. See L. P. Elwell-Sutton, "Political Parties in Iran, 1941-1948," *The Middle East Journal*, Vol. III, No. 1 (Jan. 1949), p. 49.

[6] Khalil Maleki, *Do Ravesh baraye Yek Hadaf* (Two approaches toward the same goal), Teheran, n.d.

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its ideological appeal. On the whole, the party during this phase typified the kind of Communist-inspired movement which frequently gains a foothold in underdeveloped countries by playing upon serious social and economic grievances and appealing to the nationalistic, anti-imperialist, and deepseated anti-Western feelings prevalent among broad elements of the population. As elsewhere in the underdeveloped world, the Communist movement in Iran was able to mobilize the destructive forces latent in these forms of protest and resentment and turn them to the active service of the party's political goals.

Internal Dynamics

A survey of the social make-up of the TPI indicates that the party fully appreciated these objective conditions of Iranian society. Thus, for instance, its concentration on the urban population rather than on the peasantry reflected recognition that the peasants were still to a large extent integrated in their traditional social units, while the semi-skilled or unskilled laborers in the cities, uprooted from their accustomed system of social relationships, were in an unfamiliar setting and consequently more susceptible to Communist radicalism. In fact, the Iranian experience shows that, although the TPI had an essentially middle-class intellectual social basis, these segments of the labor force were especially responsive to the party's initial recruitment efforts. Skilled workers, on the other hand, frequently defected from the movement when trade unions organized by rival agencies, including the government, offered more attractive rewards.

The Communist movement in Iran naturally derived a major part of its appeal from the fact that it constituted the most radical challenge to the existing political system and the social conditions long perpetuated by that system. In Iran as elsewhere, various types of alienation produced different types of susceptibility to the Communist appeal, depending on the particular needs and interests of individual adherents to the movement, whether these needs and interests were personal, group-related or ideological. Besides general political alienation from the system, which produced a susceptibility dependent on all these needs, social alienation, real or imaginary, was also an important factor.

This latter type of alienation, caused by ethnic, religious, and cultural discrimination, has traditionally been exploited by Communist movements for agitational and propaganda purposes, particularly in societies with substantial minority groups. Thus, the Iranian movement embraced members of all types of minority groups, whether constitutionally recognized religious minorities like the Armenians and Jews, or linguistically-based minorities like the Azarbayjanis and the Kurds, whose grievances caused numerous upheavals during the early postwar period. The fact that these minority groups were more heavily represented in the leadership organs of the TPI than in those of other Iranian political parties, and that this representation was to some extent disproportionate to their numerical strength in the overall national population, suggests that the party pursued a conscious policy of facilitating the advancement of minority representatives in its higher echelons as a means of appealing to this type of alienation.

An analysis of the processes of recruitment into and defection from the movement in this period suggests a substantial interrelation between the two, inasmuch as the types of situation which facilitated recruitment were causitively related to the opposite situations which encouraged defection, frequently arising as a direct reaction to each other.[7] Recruitment into the TPI appears to have been heaviest in the following three kinds of situation:

(1) When the party appeared to have immediate prospects of achieving controlling political power, as was the case during the peak period of Soviet political intervention in Iran in 1945-46;

(2) When the movement seemed to be gaining a legitimate place in the fabric of Iranian politics as in early World War II, or when conditions of serious social breakdown made the

[7] This analysis is based on the best available estimates of the party's fluctuating numerical strength in this period, which witnessed party congresses in 1944 and 1948 and an electoral campaign in 1943-44. The membership estimate ranges between 25,000 and 50,000 in the capital and about the same in the rest of the country excluding Azarbayjan and Kurdistan where the Communist movement was represented by organizations other than the Tudeh party during a substantial part of this period. For a Western source, see U.S. Congress, House Committee on Foreign Affairs, *Communism in the Near East,* 80th Congress, 1st Session, 1948.

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party's radicalism more attractive, as was at least partially true in the period immediately preceding the outlawing of the TPI in 1949 and again during the last few months of the Mossadegh government in 1953;

(3) When the party was protectively colored by formal or tacit cooperation with non-Communist parties, as during the latter part of the allied wartime occupation and the initial phase of the Ghavam government culminating in the formation of a coalition cabinet in the summer of 1946.[8]

Each of the situations described above was followed by the emergence of a contrary set of circumstances which had a reverse effect on the party, prompting defections from its ranks. These contrary circumstances were as follows:

(1) The diminution or disappearance of the party's prospects of attaining power, causing widespread disillusionment among its adherents —as happened following the sudden change in Soviet tactics in Iran in 1946;

(2) A reversal of government policy from accommodation to severe repression of the party, as occurred with the illegalization of the movement in 1949;

(3) A decline in party morale resulting from doctrinal misconceptions or inability to accept compromise solutions, such as developed in the wake of the dissolution of the coalition cabinet at the end of the summer of 1946.

The emergence of one of these latter situations was frequently highlighted by a party crisis ostensibly resulting from an abrupt change in the party line. However, such tactical shifts were not the primary cause of defections from the party; rather, they merely brought what one analyst has described as an "opening of the flood gates, permitting the already disenchanted and the dissatisfied to move out in the comparative safety and anonymity of party crisis."[9] The waves of defection which struck the TPI at the time of the party crises at the beginning of 1947 and following the collapse of the National Front government in August 1953 fit into this pattern. That the 1947 crisis in particular merely released pent-up discontent within the party is substantiated by the acknowledgments of members of the leading defector groups of that time that their dissatisfaction grew out of dissension which had developed at the First Party Congress in 1944.[10]

Turning to the social characteristics of adherents to the TPI, a survey of personal background data for a selected sample of members of the party's leading organs indicates that poverty alone was not a decisive measure of susceptibility to the Communist appeal. While the majority of rank-and-file party members drawn from the urban and industrial groups did indeed fall in the lower and middle-income categories, they included many whose susceptibility to the Communist appeal was merely temporary, influenced mainly by the immediate chance to participate in agitational acts such as strikes, demonstrations and the like. For the present study, it is more useful to focus on the social characteristics of former party cadres, whose conversion to communism and assimilation into the movement, as judged by length of membership, consciousness of party goals, and degree of commitment, was more genuine and lasting. The three major groups analyzed were: (1) members of the leading organs of the TPI, notably the Central Committee and the larger Plenum consisting of both regular and non-voting alternate members of the Central Committee, as well as the party's parliamentary group in the Majlis; (2) a selected sample representing a cross section of former cadre participants; and (3) defectors of the Maleki group, who represented the intellectual segment of the party until 1947.[11]

One finding that clearly emerges from this analysis is the predominance of middle-class and better-educated groups among the party cadres and members of the higher leadership echelons throughout this phase of the TPI's existence. This general bias in favor of the intelligentsia reflects, in part, the conviction that the

[8] *Ettelaat* (Teheran), Aug. 1, 1946.

[9] Gabriel A. Almond, *The Appeals of Communism*, Princeton, N.J., Princeton University Press, 1954, p. 327.

[10] Maleki, *op. cit.*

[11] Chief sources used for this analysis are: *Seyre Komonism dar Iran* (Evolution of Communism in Iran), Teheran, Military Governorship, 1956; *Mardom* (theoretical journal of the Tudeh Party), Vol. I, Nos. 1-4, 1948; C. Steiner, "Der Iranische Kommunismus," *Ost-Probleme* (Bonn), No. 39, Sept. 1955; H. Carrere d'Encausse, "Le Toudeh Iranien," *Revue Militaire d'Informations* (Paris), February-March 1957.

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poorest, landless section of the peasantry could not be relied upon as a dependable source of recruits, although its potential importance as a target of agitational activity aimed at building up mass support of party policies was never totally ignored. In terms of occupation, predominance has rested with the white-collar and professional categories, including students, whose susceptibility to the Communist appeal has been more evident in the later stages of secondary schooling and the initial stages of higher education.

Most of these attributes and tendencies continued to characterize the TPI in the years immediately following its illegalization in February 1949 and, to a large extent, throughout the period of the nationalist movement from early 1951 to the summer of 1953. The resurgence of the party in the latter period, however, was favored by a new political climate which merits closer scrutiny.

Communism and Nationalism

The period of the nationalist movement saw the appearance of various objective conditions that were conducive to the revival of the party. The foremost of these was the disintegration of the authority of the state and of its security apparatus, with the concomitant restoration of a large measure of political freedom. Throughout the Mossadegh era, the TPI pursued the double objective of intensifying the radicalism of the nationalist movement and restoring the party to its former position as the sole organization of the Communist Left.

Although still nominally outlawed, the TPI reemerged on the scene in the form of several cover organizations which not only absorbed most of its former adherents but also managed to recruit new followers with their nationalistic and xenophobic slogans.[12] The appeal of these TPI successor organizations was enhanced by the fact that in contrast to the early postwar period, when the party had been identified with Soviet policies of imperialistic encroachment in Iran, they were now engaged in a highly popular agitation against the political and economic influence of a Western power.

By the same token, however, the movement was confronted by a number of crucial doctrinal and organizational problems which distinguished this phase of its development from the earlier period. Basic among these were: (a) the problem posed by nationalism as a rival ideology attractive to the politically articulate, and potentially obstructive to the advance of communism; and (b) the attitude to be adopted by the Communists toward the national bourgeosie and its organizational instrument, the National Front.

With regard to the first problem, it should be noted that nationalism in Iran has been given diverse connotations depending upon the needs and aspirations of particular segments of Iranian society. For the alienated masses of the population, it has come to mean social reform, free elections, industrialization, more equitable distribution of land, and non-alignment in international affairs. In contradistinction to this brand of nationalism, symbolized by Mossadegh, the present Iranian regime identifies positive nationalism with the consolidation of state power.[13]

During the greater part of its existence, the Communist movement in Iran sought to nurture a special kind of leftist nationalism having many of the former characteristics.[14] Thus, Communist propaganda heavily emphasized such slogans as national independence, democracy, and social equality. The effectiveness of this appeal was aided by the fact that the general public remained largely ignorant of the party's true ideological commitment, at least until 1955 when all pretense of noncommunism was abandoned.

In the period of its open identification with communism, the party has frequently been accused of pursuing pro-Soviet and anti-nationalist policies. To the faithful, it has been able to explain away these charges by invoking proletarian internationalism and communism's ideo-

[12] The most important of these cover organizations were the Society of Peace Partisans, The Society to Combat Colonialism, and numerous "democratic" youth, women's and labor groups. *Seyre Komonism dar Iran, op. cit.,* pp. 334-41.

[13] For a comprehensive study of Iranian nationalism, see Richard Cottam, *Nationalism in Iran,* Pittsburgh, Penna., University of Pittsburgh Press, 1964.

[14] A critical exposé of the party's concept of nationalism is found in Ehsan Tabari's essay "Esteghlal Chist?" (What is independence?), in *Razm* (Teheran), Vol. II, No. 6 (December 1948), pp. 1-3.

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logical universalism. To its less confirmed sympathizers, it has sought to defend its posture on the ground that this was consistent with an "analysis of the Soviet state and the international front for peace and freedom and should not be confused with anti-nationalism." [15] The effectiveness of these defenses has been largely dependent upon the continued alienation of the politically articulate groups of Iranian society and the availability or absence of other effective channels of protest against the existing political system. There is little doubt, however, that questioning of the party's professed dedication to nationalist goals has been a major cause of defection from the movement, especially by adherents of middle-class origin. Continued preoccupation with this issue was evidenced by the party in the course of its attempted revival during 1959-61. Plenary sessions of the Central Committee then formulated the concept of a regime of national democracy as the political manifestation of a type of nationalism which was defined as "negative only in relation to the imperialist powers and positive from the viewpoint of national interest." [16]

The party's attitude toward nationalism was, of course, closely linked with the whole problem of its relations with the national bourgeoisie, as represented politically by the National Front. The advent to power of the Mossadegh government, which represented the Front, further complicated the problem, for the leaders of the Front became less amenable to the idea of an alliance with the Communists after assuming control of the government than they had been when out of power. So far as the party was concerned, there were general theoretical guidelines governing its attitude. Since the end of World War II and the failure of Moscow's attempts to establish Soviet political hegemony in Iran and Turkey, international communism had returned in general to the Comintern line of 1928-38. This line, while essentially supporting national liberation movements, had denied the capacity of the petty bourgeoisie to represent faithfully the interests of the masses and hence postulated that national liberation could be successfully accomplished only under direct Communist leadership. The postwar policy, however, was not as rigid as its predecessor of 1928: although still accusing the national bourgeoisie of vacillating between revolution and connivance with imperialism, this policy by and large sanctioned temporary Communist collaboration with the bourgeoisie in national patriotic fronts.[17]

"*National Patriotic Front*"

Tactically, this collaboration was not to differ radically from the various united and popular fronts of the 1930's, but the aim was entirely different. Whereas the primary objective of the earlier fronts had been to combat fascism rather than to overthrow the rule of the exploiting classes, Communist policy now envisioned the formation of national anti-imperialist fronts as a stepping stone towards the establishment of regimes such as that of Mossadegh. In Iran, moreover, the partners of the Communists in such an alliance would not be democratic parties, but rather groups whose attitude towards democracy was for the most part hardly more positive than that of the Communists themselves. Hence, the Iranian Communist leaders were called upon to abstain from criticizing the right-wing, semi-fascist and fanatical Moslem organizations, just as their counterparts had refrained from attacking Socialist and other non-Communist leaders and parties in the popular front era of the mid-1930's.[18]

In practice, however, these general guidelines proved inadequate in that they failed to provide solutions for certain contingencies that were likely to arise in the course of the Communists' projected alliance with the national bourgeoisie. For one thing, they did not specify what action the "progressive" forces should take vis-à-vis the national bourgeoisie if and when the community of interest between them ceased to exist. Nor did they define when and under what conditions the national bourgeoisie

[15] Davoud Nowrouzi, "Hezbe Tudehe Iran, Yek zorourate Tarikhi baraye Keshvare ma" (The Tudeh Party, a Historical Necessity for our Country), *Donya* (New Series), Vol. II, No. 1, p. 35 (n.d.).

[16] Ardeshir Ovanessian, "Anti-Communism — The Enemy of Mankind: Behind the Smoke-screen of Positive Nationalism," *World Marxist Review,* Vol. V, No. 9 (Sept. 1962), pp. 74-9.

[17] Walter Laqueur, *Communism and Nationalism in the Middle East,* New York, Praeger, 1956, p. 290.

[18] Alexander Bennigsen, "The National Front in Communist Strategy," in Walter Laqueur, ed., *The Middle East in Transition,* New York, Praeger, 1958, pp. 363-64.

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should be considered as no longer fulfilling a "progressive" function.[19]

Thus, in the uprising of July 1952, the party allied itself with the National Front for the immediate purpose of reversing Mossadegh's temporary ouster from power. However, when the reinstated Mossadegh government subsequently instituted a vigorous anti-Communist campaign, partially in order to reassure the alarmed population but mainly to consolidate governmental authority, all the party could do in an effort to counteract the move was to step up its anti-Americanism.[20] This reaction at a time when the nationalist regime was desperately seeking to drive a wedge in the Anglo-American front proved to be a tactical blunder which contributed heavily to the government's downfall.

Only late in 1953 does the party seem to have formulated a more positive course of action to meet a possible similar contingency. The old leadership, operating largely from East European exile, resolved that conventional political means of achieving power were no longer adequate, even if reinforced by the sporadic use of violence. Neither the utilization of parliamentary channels in 1943-44 and again in 1952-53 nor the attempt at a united front with the nationalist forces had enabled the party to obtain a share in political power, much less full control of the government.

Infiltration of the Army

The July 1952 uprising and subsequent events had brought the military into open involvement in national politics. For at least the last five months of the National Front government, the dominant feature of the power struggle between the monarch and the Prime Minister was a contest for the support of the army, which both sides recognized as indispensable. Nor were the Communists slow to grasp the significance of this new phenomenon. In fact, open efforts to infiltrate the armed forces had already been a prominent feature of the party's activities in 1945-46, when it had scored substantial success in inducing military defections to the Azarbayjan rebels and in fomenting local garrison uprisings in the Soviet-occupied provinces. Subsequently, however, the party had seemingly abandoned these efforts until the period of the nationalist movement.

Now, once again, the intelligentsia of the armed forces, which shared many of the social characteristics of its civilian counterpart, became the target of a renewed and intensive Communist recruitment effort. This time the effort was not handicapped, as it had been in 1945-46, by resentment of direct Soviet intervention on Iranian soil, and it succeeded in building a tightly-organized underground Communist network within the armed forces. The network was placed under the direction of a small core of non-military party veterans appointed by and responsible to the TPI Central Committee, and its existence was kept secret even from members of the party's cover organizations.[21] But in spite of the extensive inroads achieved by this network in the army, when the virtual collapse of state authority in August 1953 presented an opportune moment to call it into play, the party's civilian leadership failed to act decisively. One may surmise that the uncertainty which pervaded the Communist movement in the wake of Stalin's death and the absence of any newly-formulated Soviet line for the Middle East were among the factors contributing to this failure.

In broad terms of postwar Communist international strategy, there were only three methods whereby the Sovietization of the Middle Eastern region could conceivably be accomplished: (1) violent internal revolution, to which the local Communist movements still remained ideologically committed; (2) the breakup of states with multinational populations through the action of dynamic minorities, incited and supported by the Communists—a method already attempted unsuccessfully in Iran in 1945-46; and (3) Soviet military occupation, which however—after the Iranian fiasco of 1946—became no longer feasible if Moscow was to avoid risking a confrontation with the West.[22]

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[19] *Ibid.*, p. 365.

[20] An open letter issued by the party Central Committee demanded, among other things, the immediate termination of US Point Four and military aid to Iran. See George Lenczowski, *The Middle East in World Affairs*, Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell University Press, 1956, pp. 166-67.

[21] For a detailed study of the party's military organization see *Ketabe Siyah* (Black Book), Teheran, Military Governorship, 1955, and *Seyre Komonism, op. cit.*

[22] Bennigsen, *op. cit.*

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In the summer of 1953, for obvious reasons, only the first course of action could have been contemplated in Iran. In order to mount a violent revolution, however, the Communists would have had to rely, at least initially, on the cooperation of the national bourgeoisie, and although they had been able to secure a temporary alliance of this nature in July 1952 for the immediate goal of restoring Mossadegh to power, such cooperation was no longer possible in August 1953. For, quite apart from the fact that the National Front was in disarray as a result of the gradual disintegration of the pro-government parties, its leadership was now hesitant about an open alliance with the party. In contrast to the situation in July 1952, the government faced the prospect of an open military-civilian conflict whose course could neither be predicted nor contained within the limits of a temporary tactical alliance with the Communists.

Quest for a New Line

The failure of the TPI to deal effectively with this situation stimulated dissension within the party on the issue of relations with the national bourgeoisie.[23] On the one hand, the "old guard" leaders in exile continued to adhere rigidly to the Stalinist doctrine that only the working class, led by the Communist party and united with the international proletarian movement, could capture power. They accused the national bourgeoisie of indecision and contended that adoption by the TPI of a policy of unconditional support of the National Front government would have been tantamount to opportunism and revisionism.[24] On the other hand, the lower-echelon leaders on the spot advocated general acceptance of the National Front leadership and accused the old guard of dogmatism. Had the party enjoyed a freedom of expression comparable to that which had existed in the wake of the Azarbayjan crisis of 1946, it is possible that the controversy over relations with the national bourgeoisie might have produced another leadership crisis, if not an ideological split. However, the systematic and much more intensive repression of the party in the post-1953 period relegated this issue to a purely academic plane.

It is quite likely that the formulation by Moscow of a new Communist line for the Middle East in 1956 was largely influenced by this phase of the Iranian movement, inasmuch as some aspects of the revised policy seemed to provide at least theoretical solutions for critical issues which had faced the Iranian party.[25] The essence of the new line lay in its recognition of the weakness of the Middle Eastern proletariat, and, as a corollary to this, the assignment to the bourgeoisie of the primary role in leading these countries to socialism. In its tactical application, the new formula substituted struggle against Western politico-economic domination for struggle against domestic capitalism as the priority task of the revolutionary working-class movement.[26] Traditionally, Communist doctrine had required that the working class and its organized Communist parties themselves constitute the vanguard of the national liberation front. Now, however, this concept was recognized as applicable only to countries where capitalism had reached a certain stage of development. In the Middle East, therefore, where this was not the case, it was no longer imperative for the Communist parties, acting as such, to insist upon their own leadership of the national liberation front.[27]

At a series of plenary sessions held in Leipzig and East Berlin between 1959 and 1962, the TPI Central Committee embraced the new line unreservedly, but thus far the party has not yet had an opportunity to implement it. The closest the party has come to a practical application of the revised doctrine was in the two successive elections to the 19th Majlis in 1960-61, when it unsuccessfully sought to achieve an electoral alliance with the nationalist forces.[28] The latter, however, boycotted the elections in pro-

[23] Tudeh Party Central Committee, "Darbarehe Bistohashte Mordad" (About August 19, 1953), Teheran, n.d.
[24] *Seyre Komonism, op. cit.*

[25] "The 20th Congress of the CPSU and the Tasks Set for the Study of the Contemporary East," *Sovetskoie Vostokovedeniie,* No. 1, January 1956, as cited in *Central Asian Review* (London), Vol. IV, No. 3, 1956, p. 344.
[26] Bennigsen, *op cit.*, pp. 363-64.
[27] For an analysis of these doctrinal changes, consult Carrere d'Encausse, "The Evolution of Soviet Policy Since the 20th Congress," in *The Middle East in Transition, op. cit.,* pp. 392-93.
[28] See resolution of the Fifth Plenum of the TPI Central Committee, in *Masaele Hezbi* (Party Problems) No. 5, n.d.

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test against the regime's alleged restrictive policies.

The party's efforts to improve its image and win back former sympathizers who had left the fold have been and probably continue to be handicapped by its longstanding reputation for pro-Sovietism. The post-Mossadegh rapprochement between Iran and the Soviet Union further reinforced the dissillusionment of many of the party's former sympathizers, while alienating the nationalist forces which had long harbored suspicions about the motivation and reliability of Soviet support.

Future Prospects

How, then, are the prospects for a revival of the Iranian Communist movement to be assessed? So far as domestic factors are concerned, past experience indicates that, while many of the objective conditions favorable to its spread are still lacking, the persistence of various types of susceptibility to its appeal and the absence of effective alternatives to its radicalism make a resurgence of the movement possible. As long as a considerable segment of the politically articulate Iranian population remains alienated, the community of interest between the Tudeh party and other forces of opposition in the country, even though based on purely tactical and non-ideological grounds, is likely to continue.

Indeed, it is on this community of interest that the party has, since 1953, pinned all its hopes of achieving a united front alliance.[29] Its task has been facilitated to some extent by Communist doctrinal changes in recent years, as well as by the endeavor to adjust party policy and machinery so as to heighten the party's appeal to the intelligentsia, offering the latter a comprehensive program envisaging the conquest of political power, prolonged industrialization, economic planning, a recasting of the social structure, and foreign policy realignment with the Soviet Union.

Obviously, however, Communist prospects in Iran, as elsewhere, cannot be appraised solely in the domestic context. When examined within the broader framework of international politics, the chances for a successful revival of the Iranian movement appear less promising. The vital importance of the country's independence from the standpoint of Western strategic and political interests not only rules out the likelihood of Soviet intervention as the surest method of communizing Iran, but it also points to probable Western opposition to any radical change in the prevailing balance of power in the Middle East. In other words, the prospects for a revival of the Iranian Communist movement are enmeshed in the larger context of the cold war between East and West.

In summary, it may be said that within these overlapping contexts the future of Iranian communism remains contingent on the strength or weakness of the state power, the existence or absence of rival political forces on the left and right, and the degree of success achieved by the party in infiltrating and manipulating various national front organizations in its effort to unify all existing forces of political opposition.

[29] See the party's open letter of February 7, 1961, to the National Front, cited in Abdolsamad Kambakhsh, "Iran at the Crossroads," *World Marxist Review*, Vol. IV, No. 9 (September 1961), p. 43.

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Khrushchev and After

MYRON RUSH: *Political Succession in the USSR.*
New York and London, Columbia University Press, 1965.
ROBERT CONQUEST: *Russia after Khrushchev.*
New York-Washington-London, F. A. Praeger, 1965.

Reviewed by Richard T. Davies

IT HAS BEEN Mr. Rush's view, now as before the fall of the former premier of the USSR, that "Khrushchev was the ruler, exercising decisive authority" (p. xiv); that, "like Stalin, Khrushchev achieved his goal" of attaining decisive power (p. 42); that, "under conditions of individual rule like that exercised by Khrushchev from 1957 to 1964, Presidium members tended to become personal agents of Khrushchev's rule" (pp. 153-54). True, these assertions are tempered, if only left-handedly. Thus, while "much of Stalin's former power was in Khrushchev's hands, . . . enough remained outside to warrant calling this new mode of rule Khrushchev's limited dictatorship (p. 70). Furthermore "Khrushchev unquestionably was constrained by proximate political pressures, but there is little evidence that they compelled him to act contrary to his judgment" (p. 109). The emphasis is nevertheless clearly and heavily on Khrushchev as "supreme ruler" (p. 113).

Mr. Rush dates Khrushchev's full ascendancy from the defeat of the "anti-party group" in June 1957. In a surprising aside, he writes:

While it has generally been assumed in the West that the so-called "anti-party group" attempted to remove Khrushchev as First Secretary. . ., this has never been asserted in the Soviet press. It is contradicted by the testimony of those of its members who have been allowed to express themselves publicly (*p. 69*).

Instead, he says, the "group" intended only "to restrict" or "to pare" the First Secretary's power.

But, at both the 21st and 22nd Party Congresses, speakers declared that the "group" sought "organizational changes" in the party leadership and plotted against the First Secretary. Khrushchev himself, at the 22nd Congress, accused members of the group of having "developed an anti-party fractionary struggle against the leadership of the CC and first and foremost concentrating their fire against me, as First Secretary of the CC. . . ." His adversaries, he said,

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wished "to seize the leadership of the party and the country, to remove those comrades who unmasked the criminal deeds committed during the period of the cult of personality. The anti-party group wanted to raise Molotov to the leadership."[1] Similarly, the anti-party group was charged by Kuusinen with, "above all," seeking "the removal from the Presidium of the CC of Comrade Nikita Sergeievich Khrushchev. . . ."[2]

Mr. Rush's thesis is that Khrushchev's power grew constantly from 1953 to 1957; that "with a single stroke he destroyed the opposition" in June 1957 (p. 69), thereby resolving the Stalin succession crisis and becoming "the ruler, exercising decisive authority." Khrushchev's power, he contends, remained essentially undiminished almost to the moment of his overthrow. In Mr. Rush's account the ruler, to whom his Presidium colleagues—or, as he put it, subordinates—are said to have owed their positions and authority, appears as strong in 1964 as at any time during his seven years of power. "Perhaps the most striking feature of Khrushchev's personal rule and of the stability it gave to Soviet politics was his capacity to maintain his power despite the failure of his policies," writes Mr. Rush (pp. 109-10). He then lists and discusses the staggering failures—in agriculture, in the international Communist movement, in the dispute with the Chinese Communists, in the campaign against the Western position in Berlin, in the Cuban missile adventure.

HOW, THEN, does Mr. Rush explain Khrushchev's fall? ". . . Khrushchev's ouster was due to a conspiracy and not to politicking against his leadership . . ." (p. 210). And further on:

There were two basic reasons for Khrushchev's downfall. The first is the absence of terror. . . . Even without physical terror, the other means employed by Khrushchev to prevent the formation of hostile groupings might have sufficed, had he not attempted, however cautiously, to arrange his succession. The leading conspirator was the man he had chosen to succeed him. Whether Brezhnev feared the growing power of the counter-heir, Podgorny, or was simply impatient to rule, in the absence of terror he and his allies were able to overthrow the ruler and make Brezhnev the First Secretary (p. 213).

Reviewers in this Issue

RICHARD T. DAVIES—American analyst of Soviet affairs, contributor to *Problems of Communism* and other journals.

ALBERT E. SHIRK—student of French politics, author of dissertation on the French CP (Harvard University).

WIKTOR SUKIENNICKI—author of numerous studies of Soviet and international law, presently with the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace, Stanford, California.

At the least, this explanation of Khrushchev's ouster appears to contradict Mr. Rush's contention that this rule gave stability to Soviet politics. How stable is a polity in which, according to Mr. Rush's hypothesis, the "supreme ruler" can be removed by a palace revolution, concocted overnight? Such an interpretation assumes that there is no organic connection between the espousal of given policies and their results on the one hand, and the power struggle within the leadership on the other. In the reviewer's opinion, it vastly oversimplifies the political process which operates within the Soviet leadership, much as it does in any other political system.

Mr. Rush has produced a purely theoretical treatment of Soviet leadership politics during the Khrushchev era. In his effort to make his theory plausible, he has ignored data which the student of politics, and particularly of Soviet politics, must take into account. One searches in vain for any serious treatment of the controversies surrounding the most important issues of Soviet politics in the period 1957-64. If they are referred to at all, they are given short shrift. Thus, the controversy aroused by Khrushchev's proposals to make significant cuts in the conventional armed forces and to place greater reliance on nuclear rocketry is reduced by Mr. Rush to "signs of restiveness" among the top military leadership (p. 155).

The important and fascinating questions are surely *why* Khrushchev was removed from power and what this episode, as seen against the background of the events of 1953-64, can tell us about the nature of Soviet leadership politics. I am afraid that Mr. Rush's explanations not

[1] *XXII sezd Kommunisticheskoi Partii Sovetskovo Soiuza—Stenograficheskii otchet,* Moscow, 1962, t. II, p. 585.

[2] *Ibid.,* p. 390.

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only fail to answer these questions but raise a host of new ones to boot.

IN *Russia After Khrushchev*, Mr. Conquest has produced a sequel to his *Power and Policy in the USSR: The Study of Soviet Dynastics* (London and New York, 1961). The new book builds upon the conclusions reached in the earlier volume. A reading of both brings us closer to a reasonable explanation of Khrushchev's fall.

Thus, while Mr. Rush maintains that in 1957-64 Khrushchev exercised effective sovereignty, Mr. Conquest shows that sovereignty resided actually in the Presidium of the CC-CPSU and that Khrushchev was removed from power because he violated the principle of collective leadership, because he flagrantly disregarded the views and objections of his colleagues—because, indeed, he was attempting to secure the very position of supreme power which in Mr. Rush's view he had won in 1957. Yet the best proof that he never achieved it was his ouster in 1964.

Mr. Rush at one point correctly described the situation within the Presidium of the CC as one of "unstable equilibrium." It is Mr. Conquest, however, who shows how strictly the paradoxicality of that description must be honored if we are to understand Soviet leadership politics. In my opinion, these are the conclusions to be drawn from his meticulous account of the 1953-64 period:

(1) After Stalin's death, effective sovereignty resided in the Presidium of the CC-CPSU, which operated within a loosely framed concept of "collective leadership."

(2) The inability of any individual or fraction to use the secret police for his or its personal or political ends was the precondition for the maintenance of "collective leadership." This neutralization, or depoliticalization, of the secret police was the object—and consequence—of Beria's removal.

(3) A struggle by certain individuals (we can certainly name Malenkov, Beria, and Khrushchev) and by factions to impose their views in policy decisions was conducted uninterruptedly within the Presidium throughout the period. (Here is the element of "instability".) Without the weapon of police terror, none of the contestants, or factions, was able to reduce the Presidium to an organ wholly subordinate to his or its will. *Only by the physical destruction of opponents could this end be achieved.*

(4) During this period, the implementation of policy (as distinct from its formulation, which took place within the Presidium) was entrusted to a hierarchical executive structure, dominated by the First Secretary of the CC-CPSU. (Here was the element of balance, or "equilibrium".)

(5) Khrushchev fell because, in his indefatigable striving to establish his personal rule, he persistently overstepped the bounds of "collective leadership" as the concept was understood within the Presidium. He attempted to broaden his executive function by assimilating to it the function of policy-formulation, which was understood to belong to the Presidium. What is more, he did this in order to secure the adoption of policies which failed, or at best, did not live up to the advance billing he gave them.

The nature of Soviet leadership politics is thus less simple than the version offered to us by Mr. Rush. The general acceptance in the West of such oversimplified concepts should not come as a surprise. As Conquest puts it:

We usually recognize the complexity, and the idiosyncrasies, of a polity and society to which we are accustomed. But we are all too apt to oversimplify our ideas of those of which our knowledge is more indirect. We are inclined to construct models of strange political systems on too simple a basis, especially when the facts are not readily available. But it is quite inappropriate to think of Soviet politics in anything like Western terms. The most striking difference is that there is no mechanism for the social forces to express themselves. In the advanced countries, society and polity virtually coincide. In the Soviet Union, the political world is limited to a few thousand members of a self-perpetuating elite. Moreover, this elite was originally formed, and has been trained for decades, with the purpose of enforcing its will against the tendencies of society as a whole (*p. 4*).

IN HIS WORK, Mr. Conquest also strives to envisage some of the alternatives which stand before a great people, endowed—as any other people—with many virtues and some vices, visibly on the march toward a goal still hidden in the recesses of time, and capable, in its striving to reach that goal, of contributing great good or doing great harm to the rest of mankind. His vision enables him to write with insight, understanding, and pro-

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fundity of the stages of that march. He sees the possibility of the development of democracy in Russia, and the hypotheses which he advances to support such a possibility are respectable and merit careful consideration. Certainly all of us can agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Conquest's conclusion:

. . . the firm establishment of world peace—and a reasonable life for the Soviet peoples—depends upon the evolution of Russia towards a genuine liberalism (p. 247).

We must, at the same time, recognize the existence of other less hopeful alternatives as well. Forty-six years ago, Sultan Galiev wrote: "If the Soviet power is transformed into state capitalism, rightist, chauvinist elements . . . will inevitably come to power. . . ." [3] The possibility that the Soviet political equation will work itself out in terms of an extreme reaction to the right is as likely as the possibility of the emergence of a genuinely liberal order.

Interesting as are Mr. Conquest's efforts to pierce the veil of the Soviet future, it is his analysis of the past that is of value to us now. The last word on Khrushchev's rise and fall has yet to be spoken. In the meanwhile, the interested reader can do no better than to turn to Mr. Conquest's work for a stimulating and penetrating guide to this significant episode in the history of post-Stalin Russia.

[3] Quoted in A. Bennigsen and C. Quelquejay, *Les mouvements nationaux chez les musulmans de Russie . . .*, The Hague, 1960, p. 179.

Communism in France

ANNIE KRIEGEL: *Aux origines du communisme français.* Paris, Mouton & Co., 1964. 2 vols.
Naissance du Parti communiste français. Paris, Rene Julliard, 1964.
DAVID CAUTE: *Communism and the French Intellectuals.* New York, Macmillan, 1964.

Reviewed by Albert E. Shirk, Jr.

HISTORIES published to date on the various working class movements in France, especially in the interwar period, have been largely the work of members and ex-members of Socialist, Communist, or Syndicalist organizations or else of non-academic writers—while scholars, particularly those in the French university community, have tended to neglect the subject. However, this situation seems headed for change, at least with regard to the French Communist Party. In the universities of Europe and the United States studies of various phases of the party's history are now nearing completion. The books here reviewed may be looked upon as a first—and impressive—indication of this new academic interest.

To be sure, the two authors of these books are academics with a difference. Mme. Kriegel is a

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former Communist who was active in the party throughout the Stalinist period, leaving only in 1957; after years of interim study she is now finally entering the upper ranks of the bourgeois *universitaire* (her two-volume *Aux Origines* . . . represents her *thèse de doctorat* at the Sorbonne). Mr. Caute is too young to have been a participant in most of the events he describes, but his rather astonishing accomplishments—among them, a prize-winning novel and a play before he reached his mid-20's—clearly mark him off from the ordinary youthful scholar presenting his first published work.

MME. KRIEGEL'S two main volumes offer a wealth of new material on the French Communist Party. Together, the volumes contain well over 900 pages and represent over nine years of research. During those years Mme. Kriegel tapped every imaginable kind of source, making good use of her many personal contacts in the party and in other working-class organizations. She provides her readers with an amazing bibliography that in itself extends to nearly 100 full pages.

The underlying thesis of these volumes is surprising given the author's background—indeed it would perhaps be surprising in any study of social history coming out of a modern French university, where even non-Marxist historians tend to lay heavy stress on social and economic determinism. Mme. Kriegel tells us that the key to understanding the origins of the Communist Party in France is not to be found in the economic or social substructures of the time, but in pure "politics," in the accidental conjuncture of phenomena or events which had little or nothing to do with fundamental structures or "realities." This is of course a way of looking at history which has been long subject to official condemnation by the guardians of the faith Mme. Kriegel has abandoned. In her preface, she confides to the reader her initial reluctance to accept history as other than an inquiry into certain logical structures of the past. This was while she was still in her Stalinist period. But as her researches progressed, and with the admonition of Georges Lefebvre constantly in mind—*de l'érudition, et encore de l'érudition*—she finally left behind her original presuppositions of historical inevitability. The end result is a most undogmatic, penetrating, and imaginative work.

MANY OF Mme. Kriegel's conclusions do not differ significantly—except in terms of documentation—from previous studies, but there is also much that is new and that goes far beyond the scope of other analyses of the period. Figuring prominently in her more original contributions are a minute dissection of the anarchistic *"ultragauche"* in France, a brilliant analysis, federation by federation, of voting and membership growth of the SFIO in 1919 and 1920, and a long narrative on the 1920 railroad strikes (using completely new documents).

In Mme. Kriegel's obvious concern to deal exhaustively with her original material is to be found perhaps the most significant fault in her work—that of unevenness. At times the attention given to a particular problem is surprisingly limited; but elsewhere the elaboration of detail is overwhelming. The most extreme example of this unevenness is the treatment of the 1920 railroad strikes, where she was obviously concerned to make full use of the documents she discovered. Despite the relatively limited importance of the strikes, she devotes some 200 pages to them—a little more than a fifth of the two volumes.

This uneven undergrowth of facts is not the only obstacle that the reader will encounter. Mme. Kriegel's style is unnecessarily lofty and convoluted, and she resorts too often to involved footnotes that might just as well have been incorporated into the text. Reading is thus slow and even painful; one is frequently left with the impression, after finishing the fourth lengthy footnote of the third dependent clause, of having grappled with a complex puzzle.

The general reader, desiring to get an idea of what Mme. Kriegel has written, will do well to look at her more modest and popular *Naissance du Parti Communiste Français:* its introduction and very competent editing of the debates at the Congress of Tours (where the PC was born from the schism of the SFIO) offer a more readable summary of many of the points made in the main volumes. But for those with the time, energy, and interest, the main volumes provide rewarding material, rich in facts and provocative in conception. No future work of serious scholarship dealing with the early history of French communism will be possible without constant reference—and deference—to this *magnum opus.*

ALSO BREAKING new ground, although with a much different focus, Mr. Caute has turned his talents to an in-

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triguing subject which has long awaited the attention of an able historian. In spite of his literary credentials, this gifted young man from Oxford has not written his history in the poorly anchored manner often associated with the novelist or journalist attacking an historical theme. To be sure, the nature of Mr. Caute's subject—intellectuals and their attitudes to communism—does not easily lend itself to the exhaustive research and straight political narrative used by Mme. Kriegel. Nevertheless, and somewhat contrary to expectations, this reviewer found the solidity of Mr. Caute's scholarship to be one of the more remarkable aspects of his book. The great diversity of sources he draws upon, extending over a period of forty years, and his penetrating and judicious use of them give the impression that *Communism and the French Intellectuals* was the product of long years of reading and reflection, rather than a specific project that must have been executed within a relatively brief period of time.

Moreover, this reviewer found generally much to praise and little to criticize in the principal conclusions, organization (a particularly difficult aspect of the subject), and style of the book. Of special interest, both in terms of material organization and conceptual synthesis, is Mr. Caute's postulation of five "principles of utility"—the various ways the party uses the intellectual for its own political purposes—which are applied throughout the book as tools to understand and judge the party's varying stance toward the intellectual community in France.

In a book so rich in detail minor errors of fact are almost inevitable. A few of these might have been avoided if Mr. Caute had had the chance to read Mme. Kriegel's works (which, it should be noted, are amazingly free of such errors) before publishing his own: The Twenty-one Conditions were not the reason for the hesitation of the Strasbourg Congress, in February 1920, to join the Comintern —the Conditions were in fact not even fully formulated until the Second Congress of the Comintern, in the summer of 1920, and were not known in their full form in France until late fall of that year; further, the Conditions were never "enthusiastically" accepted—they were the object of great suspicion among most of those who finally embraced them.

That such a sterile, dogmatic, and subservient organization as the French Communist Party can have attracted, without the advantages of a monopoly of political power, so many first-rate and sensitive minds, seems paradoxical and even unreasonable. This no doubt explains, at least in part, the "psychological" rationalizations that have been attempted, which assume that some hidden, irrational forces must have been at work in thrusting the intellectuals into the party's fold. Mr. Caute offers astute and commonsensical criticisms of the various studies that employ the psychological approach, stressing that in many cases there were important rational considerations involved in the decision of intellectuals to join the party. He concludes that while serious damage has been done to many intellectuals under the party's heavy hand, the party has also suffered damage and failure, in terms of its *own* goals and standards, in its use of the intellectuals—making the relationship, in the final analysis, a futile and destructive one for both sides.

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The Shaping of Legality

JAN F. TRISKA and ROBERT M. SLUSSER: *The Theory, Law, and Policy of Soviet Treaties.* Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1962.
KAZIMIERZ GRZYBOWSKI: *The Socialist Commonwealth of Nations—Organizations and Institutions.* New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1964.

Reviewed by Wiktor Sukiennicki

ABOUT NINE YEARS ago, two American scholars—one a political scientist, the other a historian—embarked on an exhaustive study of Soviet diplomatic history as seen through the international treaties and agreements to which the USSR has been a party. The first fruit of this undertaking, which has had the assistance of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, was *Calendar of Soviet Treaties* (Stanford University Press, 1959), in which Professors Triska and Schlusser catalogued more than 2,500 treaties and agreements entered into by the Soviet Union from 1917 through 1957, providing source references for each instrument as well as other basic data concerning ratification, denunciation, extension and so forth.

The second result is the work reviewed here, which the preface sums up as "an attempt to extract and analyze the salient features and the more enduring tendencies, conditions, and trends which help to explain the making of Soviet treaty theory, law, and policy; to identify their basic common denominators; and to apply the resulting pattern to an overall long-term analysis of Soviet international agreements."

Considering the theory, law, and policy of Soviet treaties to be as new and unique in human history as the Soviet state itself, the authors have made every effort to treat them thoroughly and objectively, presenting an abundance of definitions, analyses, and comments by Soviet authors and politicians. As a result, about 50 percent of the volume consists of direct or indirect quotations, in which the authors from time to time insert a cautionary "!" or "sic!," since, as they rightly point out (p. 405), certain terms have "diametrically opposed meanings" as used by Russians and Westerners.

The authors obviously considered an analytical rather than an historical approach better suited to the purposes of their study. Thus, despite the radical changes that occurred in both the domestic and international situation of the USSR and in its international policy between 1917 and 1957, the authors treat the entire 40-year period as a whole, arranging their data on Soviet treaty law and treaty policy according to the formal char-

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acteristics or subject matter of the agreements.

In the section dealing with "treaty policy," for example, Chapters 16 and 17 are devoted to "political treaties," which are subdivided into treaties of alliance, treaties of mutual assistance, regional treaties, nonaggression pacts, treaties of neutrality, and peace treaties. The subchapters dealing with each of these categories are, for the most part, introduced by Soviet definitions of the subject at hand. Thus, at the beginning of the first sub-chapter, we read:

Treaties of alliance are defined by Kozhevnikov as "political agreements in which states mutually pledge themselves to act jointly for the purpose of preserving a certain political position or interest" (p. 228).

Yet neither the Soviet-German Treaty of August 23, 1939, nor the Friendship and Boundary Treaty of September 28, 1939, is even mentioned in this subchapter. The latter treaty, in fact, is not included in the book at all, or even listed in the ten-page table of "Political Treaties" in the Index of Treaties. The former is dealt with in the subchapter on "Non-aggression Pacts," where the authors present a report on its ratification by the Supreme Soviet and conclude with the citation of a Soviet statement qualifying the action as a "brilliant demonstration for peace of the peoples of the USSR and of all countries." In fact, both these treaties were joint imperialistic Soviet-German actions aimed at confirming the two countries' respective "spheres of influence" in the territories of Poland and the Baltic states. They are, furthermore, of particular importance because they marked a decisive turning point in Soviet foreign policy. Less than six years earlier, in 1934, Radek had written:

The attempt to represent the foreign policy of the Soviet Union as a continuation of Tsarist policy is ridiculous. Bourgeois writers who do so have not grasped even the purely external manifestations of this policy. . . . Tsarism, or any other bourgeois regime in Russia, would necessarily resume the struggle for the conquest of Poland and of the Baltic states. . . . The Soviet Union, on the contrary, is most anxious to establish friendly relations with these countries, considering their achievement of independence a positive and progressive historical factor.[1]

By 1939, Stalin saw this particular historical factor in a different light, and after World War II the Soviet policy of domination on the shores of the Baltic and in East-Central Europe was pursued with even greater persistence and success than it had been during the short life of the 1939 treaties.

ONE CAN HARDLY approve, either, of the authors' method of lumping together both the prewar and postwar agreements concluded by the Soviet Union with individual East European countries (*e.g.*, a total of 127 with Poland, and 70 with Czechoslovakia). While there is no difference from a formal point of view between an agreement signed by Benes or by Gottwald, by Beck or by Bierut, the actual difference is cardinal. Benes and Beck were representatives of independent states; Gottwald and Bierut acted as Soviet agents. The "agreements" concluded between the USSR and its postwar satellites are thus international agreements in form only, and it is useful to recognize them as such. (Somewhat inconsistently, the authors do give separate listings of Soviet agreements with prewar Germany and postwar West Germany on one hand, and with the client state of East Germany on the other.)

Apart from their reliance upon the texts of Soviet treaties, Professors Triska and Slusser base their analysis almost exclusively on the writings of Soviet jurists. In their effort to shed light upon the sources of Soviet concepts of international law, they have studied with great care the work of Soviet jurists dating from the early years of the Soviet state—Golubev, Korovin, Sabanin and Pashukanis among others—all of whom were born and educated under the Tsarist regime and most of whom remained untouched in their "thinking by any Marxist categories" (p. 10). The authors rightly point out that the doctrine expounded by these writers in the early 1920's remains the foundation of Soviet international law to this day; they fail, however, to reach farther back into Russian legal history and identify the real origin of Soviet legal doctrine, which must be sought in 19th-century Germany.

It is necessary to recall, first of all, that in Tsarist Russia universities in general, and law faculties in particular, had been under the predominant influence

[1] *Foreign Affairs* (New York), Vol. XII, No. 2, pp. 194-95. None of Radek's works are in fact included in the very extensive bibliography (pp. 527-52), despite the fact that Radek played an important role in Soviet foreign policy during the 1920's. Indeed, Radek's name is not even mentioned in the book.

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of German science and learning. A considerable number of Russian jurists in fact completed their training in Germany; Pashukanis, who spent some years prior to World War I as a postgraduate student in Munich, is a good example. In Imperial Germany at the time, the sway of Hegelian philosophy was still strong and the notion of state sovereignty was dominant in all studies of law, politics and even ethics. To bring this absolute concept within meaningful limits, the 19th-century masters of the legal profession—Gerber, Bergbohm, Jhering, Jellinek—had elaborated ingenious theories of voluntary "autolimitation," which explained the nature of the binding restrictions placed upon the sovereign state by domestic legislation and international treaties. It is indeed in the work of these jurists—in Bergbohm's *Staatsverträge und Gesetze als Quellen des Völkerrechts* (1877), in Jhering's *Der Zweck im Recht* (1877) and in Jellinek's *Die rechtliche Natur der Staatenverträge-Ein Beitrag zur juristischen Konstruktion des Völkerrechts* (1880)—that most of the ideas propounded by the early Soviet theorists can be found as originally formulated.[2]

Before World War I, or at any rate, until the defeat of the 1905 Revolution, some of the theories of the German jurists had been considered progressive in Russia (as in the rest of Europe), and their writings, especially those of Jellinek, were published in Russian translation. The disaster of the war, however, with its nationalistic origins, turned a larger part of the European intelligentsia against the propagators of the idea of state sovereignty, and against the German theorists in particular, who now came to be regarded as conservatives and reactionaries. Yet, in the USSR, the Soviet disciples of these men are to this day acclaimed as the "most progressive" theorists in the field of international law. This may seem a strange phenomenon, but it is easily explained: both the extreme-Right Lassonism-Treitschkism and the extreme-Left Marxism-Leninism have a common heritage—Hegelian dialectics.

Despite the book's shortcomings in this respect and others, including a few minor errors,[3] *The Theory, Law, and Policy of Soviet Treaties* is a very useful study. Apart from being a valuable reference work, it gives the reader a good understanding of the fundamental Soviet view that international law "performs a subservient and supporting function" (p. 397) in serving as a suitable "weapon in Soviet foreign-policy" making (p. 26). To diplomats whose business it is to negotiate with their Soviet counterparts, the work should serve as a powerful reminder of "the old rule, *caveat emptor*" (p. 405).

PROFESSOR Kazimierz Grzybowski's book, *The Socialist Commonwealth of Nations*, which was prepared under the auspices of the American Society of International Law, is dedicated exclusively to an analysis of the legal and institutional system that supports the conduct of relations among the countries of the Soviet "bloc." In a discussion of this "new system of international law," semasiology and terminology are all-important.

Professor Grzybowski, a solidly trained jurist, fully understands the precise meaning of legal terms as well as the fact that they are used by Communists in a "Pickwickian sense." When he entitled his book *The Socialist Commonwealth of Nations*, he was thus fully aware of the equivocal nature of the words used. He finds it "axiomatic" that "Soviet military and political control was the main agent which transformed the regimes in Eastern and Central Europe" (pp. 1-2) and he accepts Korovin's definition of "socialist nations" ("socialist countries are states which are ruled and directed by the Communist and Workers' parties"—p. 269). Moreover, he has a proper understanding of Lenin's notorious definition of dictatorship ("power unlimited by any rules and based directly on violence"). To be sure, he recognizes also that following Stalin's death, and particularly after the events in Eastern Europe of October 1956, the "former crude methods of assuring uniformity and obedience" become more sophisticated (p. 2), but he could certainly agree with Harold Berman that "the total Soviet legal system remained Stalinist in its basic structure and . . . purposes."[4]

[2] Bergbohm's name is mentioned in the text (p. 95), and so is Triepel's (p. 11), but neither is included in the general index. A translation of the first volume of Jhering's work was published in 1913 in Boston, under the title, *Law as a Means to an End.*

[3] *Polpred* means "plenipotentiary representative" (p. 210), and not "political representation" (p. 193). There is no locality called "Drissensk" (p. 199); when Chicherin spoke of the *"Drissensky uezd"* on June 17, 1920 (see *Dokumenty vneshnei politiki SSSR*, Vol. II, p. 655), he meant the Drissa district.

[4] Harold J. Berman, *Justice in the USSR*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1963, p. 67.

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Professor Grzybowski rightly views the institutional aspects of the "Commonwealth" as only a small part of the reality uniting its members; the rest of the structure is not immediately apparent. However, he consciously limits himself to the institutions exposed to the public eye—the Council on Mutual Economic Aid (CEMA or Comecon) and its specialized bodies, and the Warsaw Treaty Organization (WTO)—tracing their origin and evolution and analyzing their aims, organization and activities.

CEMA was formally established in January 1949, but during Stalin's life it played a minimal role. The economically disparate countries of Soviet-dominated Europe were then ruled directly from Moscow, which in bilateral dealings imposed upon them the Soviet political, economic, and legal order. As a result, "the last years of Stalin's reign witnessed . . . a massive reception of Soviet laws and governmental techniques by the new regimes in Eastern Europe" (p. 5).

During this period a considerable degree of unification was achieved, but the process did not reach its final stage. After the death of the old dictator, his successors in Moscow were unable to conduct relations with Eastern Europe in the same simple manner, and institutional compromise solutions were therefore sought. Thus CEMA was revitalized, and in May 1955 WTO was created. In addition, legal and cultural relations were formalized through a series of agreements, and special institutions for the settlement of disputes were also established. The result was the birth of a body of new "regional international law" somewhat similar to the so-called "American international law" but with aspirations, in consonance with Communist ideology, toward universality. "From the principle of proletarian internationalism," wrote the Soviet international lawyer, Tunkin, "flow for the socialist states concrete rights and obligations, which at the same time have the character of moral and legal rights and obligations" (p. 259). Some centuries ago, the founders of international law had something similar to say about the principles of the Holy Scripture, natural law and Christian sovereigns.

After a careful and detailed study of the "new system of international law," Professor Grzybowski concludes that "the totality of rules, which constitutes the public order of the socialist commonwealth of nations, cannot be satisfactorily studied in terms of legal characteristics" (p. 263). Moreover, he refuses to accept the Soviet jurists' claim that their conglomeration of political principles, ideological doctrines and legal institutions constitutes "a systematic whole, related to the basic principles of Marxism" (p. 263), and he observes that the role of the Communist Party in organizing cooperation among the rulers of Communist-dominated countries "has no parallel in the institutions of the free world." Indeed, he continues, "in scope and function [the party] suggests analogies with the . . . Holy Alliance, which sought to establish an exclusive international order . . . according to some higher principles of justice and legality" (pp. 271-72). The Holy Alliance, of course, eventually failed; and if one is to judge by the progress of relations among Communist states during this decade, the "new socialist system of international law" may never so much as get off the ground.

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NOTES & VIEWS

In Russia's Insane Asylums

By Laszlo M. Tikos

In 1892 Chekhov published his literary masterpiece *Ward No. 6*, launching one of his heaviest attacks against Tolstoy's philosophy of non-resistance to evil. In praising the story, Chekhov's contemporary, V. G. Korolenko, pointed out that Chekhov "investigated the question of the aim of life" and "condemned social indifference." [1] This comment corresponds to Chekhov's credo that life has meaning, and that in order to realize a "better future" a certain amount of struggle and positive action is necessary.

In *Ward No. 6*, Chekhov declares that no one can afford to be indifferent to social problems. Although he took into consideration such views as the inherent weaknesses of man and the futility of any action in view of the inevitability of death, Chekhov felt that the essence of life was to be found in man's reaction to change. As his hero, Gromov, puts it:

I react to pain with tears and cries, to baseness with indignation, to vileness with disgust. And that, in my opinion, is life! . . . to despise suffering would be tantamount to despising life itself, for man's whole existence consists of sensations of hunger, cold, mortification, loss and a Hamlet-like fear of death. . . . Christ reacted to reality by weeping, smiling, mourning, flying into a rage and grieving; he did not meet suffering with a smile, he did not despise death, but prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane that the cup might pass.[2]

Chekhov's short story concerns the doctor in an insane asylum, one Andrei Efimovich Ragin, who practices non-involvement. A stoic who reads voraciously, drinks excessively, and indulges in an occasional conversation with the only local intellectual, a retired army officer turned postmaster, Ragin manages to exist in this self-imposed vacuum for over twenty years. His insulated way of life provides not only an excuse but a justification for his indifference to the deception, fraud, corruption, and brutality which transpire daily in the hospital under his direction. It takes a fateful meeting with one of the inmates of Ward No. 6 to rouse him from his twenty-year-old apathy. Ivan Dimitrievich Gromov makes Ragin aware for the first time in his life that, for those who suffer, non-involvement is unthinkable. For them, there is a difference between sadness and joy, justice and injustice, freedom and enslavement.

But Chekhov is not content simply to have Ragin become aware of Gromov's condition; he has him actually experience injustice, poverty and humiliation. Ragin is fired

[1] Quoted passages translated by the author from Notes to Vol. X of A. P. Chekhov, *Sobranie Sochinenii* (Collected Works), Moscow, Goslitizdat, 1962, p. 525.

[2] A. P. Chekhov, *Short Novels and Stories* (translated into English by Ivy Litvinov), Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, no date, pp. 187-89.

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from his job and judged insane by those in power; he loses all his savings in an unnecessary and futile trip undertaken on the advice of his "friends"; and finally, completely penniless, his nerves shattered, he is committed to Ward No. 6 by his former friends. Here he personally experiences the stupidity of the system, the brutality and injustice, which, in his conversations with Gromov, he had once belittled. Facing violence himself, he realizes that Gromov was right. Just before he dies—after being humiliated and brutally beaten by the ward's vicious male nurse, the retired soldier Nikita—Ragin, the atheist, suddenly yearns for the existence of some absolute truth to distinguish between good and evil, for some infallible justice to avenge the martyrdom of the innocent. In describing the evolution of Ragin's thought, first through his relationship with Gromov and later through the agony he experiences before his death, Chekhov voices his uncompromising hatred of apathy and indifference, inertia and noninvolvement.

Some seventy years later, in 1965, Chekhov's masterpiece has found an unexpected echo in a story which first appeared in the Russian émigré literary magazine, *Grani,* published in Frankfurt-am-Main.[3] Written by the novelist Valery Yakovlevich Tarsis, it is a barely fictionalized account of the author's actual imprisonment in a Soviet insane asylum from August 1962 to February 1963. Shortly before his incarceration, Tarsis had written a letter to Khrushchev, then Soviet Premier, calling the Soviet Union an unbearable place to live and asking the Premier to grant him a visa to Italy. He had also sent some of his earlier manuscripts (which he had been unable to publish in the Soviet Union) abroad, where they were published under a pseudonym. Khrushchev replied to the letter by sending two policemen disguised as hospital attendants to the author's home. They delivered Tarsis to an insance asylum, where he was pronounced mad and kept in custody for the next six months, thus sharing the fate of other nonconformist Soviet writers such as Yessenin-Volpin and Valentin Ovechkin. Some time after his release from the asylum, Tarsis sent his new manuscript abroad for publication.[4] Its title, *Ward No. 7,* obviously derives from the Chekhov short story. (As recently as last June, a British journalist, Gloria Stewart, visited Tarsis in Moscow and reported [*New Statesman,* June 18, 1965] that he was living at liberty, though without employment and financial means other than limited remittances from his works published abroad.)

Tarsis had many reasons for imitating Chekhov's title. On the face of it, *Ward No. 7* is an obvious sequel to *Ward No. 6.* It shows that the brutish stupidity, cruelty and violence which existed in prerevolutionary Russia still exist in the Soviet Union today, albeit in modified form. "We've advanced beyond Ward No. 6; Ward No. 7 has better amenities," remarks Nezhevsky, a psychiatrist in Tarsis' story.[5] But except for the modernized and enlarged setting, everything that existed in Chekhov's Ward No. 6 also exists in Tarsis' Ward No. 7. In both stories the ward is actually a prison—only an imagined one for Chekhov, but a very real one for Tarsis. The latter writes:

Nezhevsky knew, of course, that mental hospitals were being used as prisons, and he was deeply shocked by the hypocrisy of the device which enabled the authorities to claim that there were no political prisoners but only "lunatics" receiving "treatment." [6]

After Ragin's purge, Chekhov's Ward No. 6 is run by the ignorant and villainous Dr. Khobotov; in Tarsis' "hospital," the "doctors" in charge are policemen in disguise, or secret agents. In Chekhov's institution, the retired soldier Nikita is assigned the task of brutally beating the inmates if they rebel. In the Soviet asylum, the recalcitrant are transferred to a so-called "Section 5" whose "inmates could be beaten into unconsciousness without any questions being asked." [7] In both stories, the "illnesses" of the inmates are fictitious, but what they really amount to is an inability to

[3] *Grani* (Izdatelstvo "Possev", Frankfurt-am-Main), No. 57, 1965. This issue also carries a photo of the author of *Ward No. 7* and some biographical notes about him. Valery Yakovlevich Tarsis was born in Kiev in 1906, son of a Greek father and Ukrainian mother, and studied history and philology at the University of Rostov-on-Don. He began his literary career in 1929 with the publication of an anthology of contemporary foreign writers and also worked until 1937 as editor of a publishing house. *Novyi mir* published one of his short stories in 1935 and his short novel *Desdemona* in 1938. During World War II, he served as an army war correspondent with the rank of captain, participated in the Battle of Stalingrad, and was wounded. While in the hospital, he met his future wife, Rosa Yakovlevna Alksins, whose brother, a Soviet air force officer, had been shot in the 1937 purges. Of some 26 works by Tarsis, it is mainly his three recent short novels which have made him famous in the West: *The Bluebottle* (London, Collins & Harvill Press, 1962); *Red and Black* (New York, Alfred Knopf, 1963, also containing *The Bluebottle*); and now, *Ward No. 7,* recently published in English translation by Collins & Harvill Press. (All quotations in this article are taken from the English edition.) These novels all appeared originally in *Grani,* Nos. 52, 54, 55, and 57.

[4] As a description of the author's own actual experience, *Ward No. 7* has documentary as well as literary value, providing the West with first-hand evidence of the new post-Stalin method of dealing with nonconformist writers and intellectuals in the Soviet Union. About the similar treatment of Yessenin-Volpin, see Marc Slonim, *Soviet Russian Literature,* London, Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 339-40.

[5] Tarsis, *Ward No. 7,* (English edition), p. 28.

[6] *Ibid.,* pp. 27-8.

[7] *Ibid.,* p. 17.

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remain indifferent to the injustices of everyday life. In the Chekhov story, there are also "patients" without even any "official illness," who have been locked up anyway. As Ragin explains, "moral values and logic have nothing to do with it. Everything depends on chance. Those who are put here, stay here, and those who are not, enjoy their liberty, that's all." [8]

Chekhov's cast of characters—the harmless old Jew Moseyka, the sad patient with tuberculosis, the indifferent peasant, the former functionary Gromov, and later Ragin himself—form a small and pitiable collection in contrast to the numerous patients and variety of "illnesses" present in Tarsis' ward. In the Soviet institution, the inmates are divided into three main categories: 1) the "Suicides," *i.e.*, those who had sought death in preference to Soviet life, but whose suicide attempts had failed; 2) the "Americans," Soviet citizens who had tried to make contacts with foreign embassies in Moscow in the hope of emigrating abroad; and 3) the "Nihilists," mostly young people who refused to serve in the armed forces or found themselves in conflict with the moral principles of the older Soviet generation. Then, too, as in the Chekhov story, there are others who do not fit into any category, but all of them have one thing in common—as one of the inmates puts it, "in one way or another we are all here thanks to the Soviet regime." [9]

Take, for example, the homespun philosopher-writer Fioletov, declared an "insane invalid of the first class" because his favorite pastime consisted of reading the Apocalypse and applying its prophecies to everyday occurrences in the Soviet Union. Or the geologist Zagulin, locked up in the hospital because he had expressed dissatisfaction with his wife's rapidly growing number of lovers. Since she had influential political "connections," Zagulin suddenly found himself "ill" and had to be taken to the "hospital" by two "nurses." Then there is Moriony, a 29-year-old university lecturer in history, who joined the company because he had read too much Soloviev and Nietzche and, as a result, had begun to find fault with the Soviet philosophy of history. Small wonder that two of his students soon joined him in the ward, where they felt free to expound their anti-Soviet ideas! (One of the students even expresses a preference for life inside the asylum rather than "outside" because of the possibility of free speech and the presence of intelligent, well-read companions.)

Another young inmate of the ward is Kolya Sikin, the son of a former Soviet diplomat. He had grown up in Italy, but had returned to the Soviet Union with his father upon the latter's recall. He found conditions in his home country appalling and soon was expelled from the university because of remarks about the lack of freedom in Soviet life. He took to drink, tried to commit suicide, and eventually landed in Ward No. 7.

One of the "Americans" is Vasili Golin, a young man in his twenties, who had previously spent six terrible years in a concentration camp. Released after Stalin's death, he had at first maintained that the regime was not responsible for its "mistakes," that "bad advisors" were to blame for ruining everything, and that communism was the only ideology that mattered. Later, however, he had come, little by little, to realize that the whole regime was corrupt, and had decided that it had to be destroyed. To this end, he wrote a letter to President Kennedy asking for United States intervention. Of course, the letter was intercepted, and Golin was locked up in the insane asylum.

The central character in *Ward No. 7*, however, is Valentine Almazov, a man whose philosophical outlook on life is similar to that of Chekhov's hero, Gromov. Both Chekhov and Tarsis describe in detail the transformation of their heroes from law-abiding, "normal" citizens, into rebellious, outraged men, judged insane by their respective societies. Gromov, witnessing the lawlessness in his own provincial town, loses his balance, becomes withdrawn, and feels that "all the violence in the world had accumulated behind his back and was chasing him." [10] Seeing no way out, he "goes mad." Almazov, a writer, is over fifty at the time of his arrest. At the start of his career, he had tried to be a good "Soviet writer," but some twenty-five years before his arrest, he had suddenly realized that he could no longer go on selling his soul, that he must stop being a party hack and begin "to write the truth." [11]

Deeply influenced by Dostoevsky, Almazov's transformation had become complete during the last few years. Exalted, abandoning all his fears, he had finally decided to express his ideas openly, at last. In so doing, he is not unlike Dostoevsky's Raskolnikov, who feels that the fate of the world depends upon him, or Gorki's hero, Danko, in *Danko's Heart*, who tears his burning heart from his chest to rouse the people who are hesitant and unwilling to follow him through the wild forest toward a better future. Almazov, experiencing the joy and pain of decision, makes up his mind that the time has come to sound the call to fight for freedom. Accepting what he now regards as his "enviable lot," he proceeds to commit an act that he knows must have grave consequences:

. . . it was then that he handed over a batch of his manuscripts to a visiting British journalist whom he met by chance. His publishers urged him to use a pseudonym, but he refused although he knew what awaited him. He cared nothing for the official version of public opin-

[8] Chekhov, *loc. cit.* (note 2), p. 180.
[9] *Ward No. 7*, p. 62.
[10] Chekhov, *loc. cit.*, p. 162.
[11] *Ward No. 7*, p. 44.

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ion, and no genuine public was left: for years, no one in Russia had said what he really thought.[12]

Almazov speaks of ". . . this one-sixth of the world . . . this walled-in concentration camp, once the land of Holy Russia's turbulence, her faith, her hopes, her disappointments and her struggles." [13] He denounces communism as the "bastard son" of fascism, the rule of the ape over man, whose corrupt and tyrannical leaders suppress the only human value on earth, individual freedom. He believes that there is no hope for the future unless man fights against the evils of the present. He seems to think that the battle can be won. In order to achieve victory, which would mean the establishment of democracy along Western lines, some aid from the West, in particular from America, would be necessary. But before the United States could commit itself, the battle would have to be fought from within by domestic forces—first of all, survivors of the Stalinist period and members of the younger generation whose fathers and brothers were killed in Stalinist concentration camps. These forces of freedom inside the Soviet Union are pictured as steadily growing. One of Almazov's fellow inmates declares:

Haven't you noticed that there are more and more of us? We don't advertise our presence, but we are there. We'll get together and we'll light such a blaze that no policeman on earth can put it out.[14]

Tarsis' hopes for the future of his country will certainly be shared by most non-Soviet readers, but the means he envisages of achieving them may well estrange some. Nowadays, it is fashionable in the West to assume that a long period of peaceful coexistence will foster tendencies in the Soviet Union which will result in a higher standard of living for Soviet citizens and, more important, in a further liberalization of the Soviet system. Tarsis clearly does not accept such an idea. To him "peaceful coexistence" means "non-involvement," a philosophy and way of life he has come to reject. Thus, he has Almazov say:

It's nonsense to talk about peaceful coexistence—what is at stake is not a political regime or a system of balance of powers but the one all-important issue: whether man as an individual, as a person, is to exist or not.[15]

Nor does Tarsis appear any more willing to accept the possibility that a solution of Soviet economic difficulties might lead to a greater measure of freedom for Soviet citizens. When one of the younger inmates of Ward No. 7 broaches this possibility, another replies:

That's where you delude yourself. . . . You want to know why? Because if you happen to be a man, you needn't hope for one shred of pity from the sleek pigs whose kingdom will come as soon as the economic problem is solved. Pigs have their piggish ways—they grunt, and if anyone chooses to sing, they don't think twice about shutting him up. . . . All collective societies are ruthlessly inhuman, whether they are ruled by parties, or dictators, or kings.[16]

Thus, no other solution remains but the total destruction of the Soviet system—a solution which, incredible as it seems, Tarsis evidently believes to be still possible.

It is interesting to note that Tarsis brings the Sino-Soviet rift prominently into his story. The university lecturer, Moriony, voices the belief that the Chinese Communists are working on a nuclear bomb of their own with the idea of using it as much against the Soviet Union as against the United States. Unless the Chinese regime is destroyed in time, he goes on to say, it will eventually swallow up all of Europe, and even extend across the seas. For the faceless Chinese masses it would be no trouble at all, he argues. They could easily build a bridge of human corpses across the ocean; to cover five thousand miles, they would need only about twenty-five million people, and Mao could easily afford that.

Tarsis' characters do not express any greater optimism about the future durability of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. They believe that the Communist satellite system is disintegrating so rapidly that its existence is already fictional. This time, it is the philosopher, Fioletov, who expresses the author's views:

. . . the so-called indissolubly united socialist camp is falling to pieces before our very eyes, like an elaborate house of cards. How can you talk seriously about indissoluble unity when there are several socialisms, all slinging so much mud at each other that it amounts to a cold war? . . . It would be equally naive to think that all is well in Poland and Hungary: the Poles and the Hungarians are Europeans, i.e., *individualists, and they will never resign themselves to being satellites of the Soviet oligarchy. Nor is everything smooth and calm in Rumania and Czechoslovakia.*[17]

Reverting to the domestic scene, Tarsis condemns not only Stalinism but the whole development of the Soviet Union since the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. He does not demand "socialist legality" or the "restoration of Leninist norms of party life;" he

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 37.
[13] *Ibid.*, p. 13.
[14] *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[15] *Ibid.*, p. 19.
[16] *Ibid.*, p. 80.
[17] *Ibid.*, p. 72.

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demands a reevaluation of the October revolution itself and asks for nothing less than the creation of a democracy in Russia. Tarsis has not been alone in expressing such views. Not long ago, in the third of a series of articles entitled "Moscow Summer,"[18] a Yugoslav professor of Russian literature, Mihajlo Mihajlov, wrote about the existence of such a trend of thought among Soviet intellectuals. Pasternak expressed similar views in *Dr. Zhivago*. Thus, startling as Tarsis' ideas might appear, they evidently are part of the intellectual undercurrents now prevalent in the Soviet Union.

Another important aspect of Tarsis' reevaluation of Soviet history is his outright equation of fascist and Soviet totalitarianism, of Nazi Party functionaries and Soviet Communist Party officials, of the Gestapo and the NKVD. In fact, Alzamov even tells one of his fellow inmates:

It was in Russia that a fascist totalitarianism was first set up. Understandably, when the rest of the world saw what we were doing, they took steps to protect themselves. In the more reactionary countries, this led to other fascist regimes, in reaction to ours. Obviously, it's high time to finish with all of these fascists, liberate Russia, and restore democracy.[19]

Again, Tarsis is not the only Soviet writer to have voiced such ideas. In Yuri Bondarev's *Silence*,[20] published in Moscow in 1962 (at approximately the same time that Tarsis began to formulate his ideas), Sergei, the son of an unjustly imprisoned man, compares the methods of the MGB with those of fascism. When he is asked to inform against his innocent father, he shouts at the party officials that they are worse than fascists.

Tarsis' reevaluation of Soviet reality also touches on such complex problems as the origins of Stalinism, the scale and limits of destalinization (and the rehabilitation of past victims), and the guilt feelings of former Communists. Concerning the origins of Stalinism, Tolya, a history student who had been committed to Ward No. 7 after trying to cut his own throat, thinks to himself:

How did a hideous tyranny arise in place of socialism? . . . . What had changed? Had men degenerated? And did the worst of the degenerates push their way out of the mob and, filled with its lust, violence and greed for power, rule it, giving the name of justice to whatever they pleased? Stalin was the classical type of such a tyrant. And the fact that the party had followed him, had put up silently with his crimes and helped to commit them, proved that the party was no better than Stalin. Nothing Khrushchev said could explain this away.[21]

On the subject of the rehabilitation of Stalinism's victims, a woman doctor who interviews Almazov on his way to the asylum makes this sarcastic comment:

You're lucky to be sent to an asylum. My husband was shot. . . The other day the regional party secretary came and condoled; he said the party would never forget what my husband did. . . That's what they all say. . . It's astonishing, isn't it? . . . Do they really think that we widows and orphans, hundreds of thousands of us, will forget what the party did to us? [22]

In another passage, Tarsis writes of Almazov's feeling of guilt for having worked for the party:

It was with bitter shame that Valentine recalled his years as a party member. Why had it taken him so long to realize that his "comrades," particularly those who were officials, secretaries, members of the party bureau, were nothing but policemen?[23]

Most readers of *Ward No. 7* will experience a feeling of letdown, of dissatisfaction. The story seems incomplete; the author's ideas lack finality. The "sophisticated" reader in the non-Communist world, in particular, will have difficulty swallowing its message, which is basically one of hatred. The characters in the story completely reject any form of compromise. Their desire is to fight for the total destruction of the society they once were part of, and now violently negate. To most of us such ideas will appear naive, absurd, and crude. Whereas Chekhov is convincing and the reader can identify himself with his striving for a better life, Tarsis remains—at best—controversial. Dr. Ragin's torturous journey along the "road to Calvary" which terminates in his death is Chekhov's great protest against the philosophy of non-resistance to evil. The Christ-like concept of the redemption of man through suffering and death is not to be found in the Tarsis story. Had Chekhov omitted the last six chapters which deal with Ragin's fate, his story also would have been incomplete.

The feeling of disappointment with the Tarsis story is accentuated by the drastic solution it presents. In contrast to Chekhov, who was in the final analysis extremely pessimistic about the nature of man and humanity in general, Tarsis believes in positive action, that men can change the world. While Chekhov put his faith in an infallible, undebatable, final proof of justice—a divine force as it were—Tarsis believes in salvation through total de-

[18] *The New Leader*, July 7, 1965.
[19] *Ward No. 7*, p. 105-06.
[20] *Novyi mir*, Nos. 3-4, 1962.
[21] *Ward No. 7*, p. 86.
[22] *Ibid.*, p. 42.
[23] *Ibid.*, p. 37.

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struction and claims that the revolting intellectuals, with the help of the Western world, can achieve their goal—democracy. The Western reader, more familiar with the political realities of his own world, cannot help but feel sadly skeptical.

Despite the many fine observations and brilliant insights in Tarsis' story, it impresses the reader as being simply an inverted or reverse version of the standard socialist-realist novel, whose essence has been succinctly summed up by Abram Tertz in these words: "A large part of Soviet literature consists of 'educational novels' showing the Communist metamorphosis of individuals and entire communities. Many of our books turn around the representation of these moral and psychological processes, which aim at producing the ideal man of the future." [24]

Like his earlier *Bluebottle*, Tarsis' *Ward No. 7* is mainly autobiographical, the confession of a man who has gone through a painful, yet spiritually rewarding experience in achieving independence of thought. One could compare it to Tolstoy's *Confession* in its sincerity, its fanaticism, its biting irony, and total exclusion of compromise. Many people found these very features hard to endure in Tolstoy and declared them incompatible with art. Doubtless many will have the same feeling about Tarsis' *Ward No. 7*.

[24] A. Tertz, *On Socialist Realism*, Pantheon Books, 1960, p. 47.

Is Tarsis, then, a bad writer? Not necessarily. What one must bear in mind is that the message of the story is more important than its artistry. For this reason, *Ward No. 7* may afford greater pleasure to the historian or politically-minded person than to members of the literary profession. The thoughts expressed in the story should be of interest to more than a narrow circle of specialists.

In sending his story abroad to be published, Tarsis does not appear to have been motivated by vanity or by a desire for personal revenge against Khrushchev and the Communist Party. Rather, he seems to have been driven by a genuine urge to voice openly, before the world, his anguish and the anguish of those around him. This emerges through the thoughts of Almazov as he is being taken to the asylum:

The time came to remind the world that there existed Russians, not just Soviet citizens, and that there existed honest Russian writers. The time came to ring the alarm, to call for the struggle for freedom, for the fight against the new fascist destroyers of souls. The West knew very little . . . . even such honest writers as Caldwell and Steinbeck were prepared to believe in the myth of Soviet democracy. Steinbeck actually said that Soviet writers were free to write as they pleased! . . . . Yes, it was time to open the eyes of the world, time to let the Steinbecks into this filthy shed, time to let them share this hell with Valentine Almazov and see for themselves whether Soviet writers were free. Let them realize that for every word of truth about the Soviet way of life, the Soviet writer could be accused of slander by the Soviet police. . . . Had he [Steinbeck] been born a Soviet citizen, he could never have published a line—he would, more likely, have been killed under Stalin or have shared the fate of Almazov today. (No offense meant, Mr. Steinbeck! A mental hospital is the only place for an honest writer in Russia nowadays!) [25]

None of the inmates of Ward No. 7 entertains any hope of an eventual liberalization of the system through peaceful evolution; they have been deceived so many times that they no longer take the party's promises seriously. Instead, they are resolved to fight, and they believe that the West must support their revolt—not out of sympathy or altruism, but because failure to do so may eventually lead to the demise of freedom in the West itself. So strong is Tarsis' apparent conviction that he ends his story on a note of bold defiance—voiced by his hero, Almazov:

The day will come when it [Ward No. 7] will be the first headquarters in the battle for freedom. Our bells are already ringing on the other shore. I believe that the hour is not far off when the bells of Moscow will ring as well. [26]

[25] *Ward No. 7*, p. 44.
[26] *Ibid.*, p. 159.

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Ilya Ehrenburg Takes a Bow

By Victor Erlich

EDITORS' NOTE: In an earlier essay-review written for this journal ("The Metamorphoses of Ilya Ehrenburg," Issue No. 4, July-August 1963), Mr. Erlich discussed the first five parts of Ehrenburg's revealing and wide-ranging memoirs, People, Years, Life, *which had appeared up till then in the Soviet literary journal* Novyi mir. *Here he turns his attention to the concluding section of the memoirs, covering the first postwar decade, which* Novyi mir*—after an interruption of almost two years—finally published in its issues from January through April of this year. Most of the earlier-published portions of the memoirs have appeared in English under the titles:* People and Life, 1891-1921 *(New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1962) and* Memoirs, 1921-1941 *(Cleveland, World Publishing Company, 1964).*

Last January, after an almost two-year interval, the Soviet literary journal *Novyi mir* resumed publication of Ilya Ehrenburg's controversial memoirs. In the April issue of the journal, Ehrenburg wrote *finis* to his chronicle. The far-flung "sentimental journey" has run its course.

The last four installments of *People, Years, Life* carry the narrative beyond the end of World War II down to the verge of the "thaw" or, more accurately, of *The Thaw.* On the whole, Ehrenburg's account of the first postwar decade follows the by now familiar pattern. Once again we are treated to fleeting glimpses of "faces, cities, countries;" to disconnected episodes recounted in nervous, if at times monotonous, staccato; to affectionate vignettes of memorable personalities, interspersed with self-conscious meanderings, long-suppressed admissions, and hedged revelations.

Yet, in this concluding section of the autobiography, the retrospective soul-searching and stocktaking loom relatively larger than they did in some of the earlier chapters. As Ehrenburg himself points out, the events related here are

. . . still fresh in everyone's memory. The scenes of the Moscow of my youth, "la Rotonde" where "Nihilist" bohemians proclaimed the end of the world, are unknown to the majority of my readers, but there is hardly any point in recapitulating the Cold War incidents or describing all the Peace Congresses. Besides, it is high time . . . to make an attempt to understand one's era and oneself.[1]

Such an attempt, Ehrenburg hastens to advise us, cannot be fully successful. It is bound to be inhibited by his own incomplete knowledge of facts, as well as his discretion or "built-in censorship":

The Soviet people, the ideals which I hold dear, have many enemies. The struggle still goes on. This, too, compels me to omit certain details;

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[1] *Novyi mir* (Moscow), No. 2, 1965, p. 41.

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yet I do not—indeed I cannot—keep silent about what matters most.[2]

What seems to "matter most" in this particular sequence is the grimness of the last years under Stalin, the sense of dismay and horror which Ehrenburg can now admit having felt at the unspeakable brutality of Zhdanov's cultural inquisition and of the anti-"cosmopolitan" drive. Today Ehrenburg feels free to confess that in 1951 he often was on the verge of despair. As he embarks upon a brief chapter dealing with the liquidation of S. M. Mikhoels and other Soviet Jewish cultural figures, he avers that "the months about which I am now going to talk were perhaps the hardest in my life."[3] Harder than the late 1930's? Apparently. It seems that the nightmare of 1948-53, coming as it did in the wake of the terrible ordeal and hard-won victory of World War II, appeared even more wanton, unbearable, and senseless.

Ehrenburg's frame of mind in those harrowing days is illuminated by a revealing episode which he recalls in the February issue of *Novyi mir*. Shortly after the anti-"cosmopolitan" campaign had been unleashed, Ehrenburg was requested to proceed to Paris to help launch what soon was to become known as the Stockholm Peace Movement. He claims to have reached his favorite city in a state of near-complete disarray. His nerves were frayed, his usual aplomb undermined by what appears to have been a combination of physical fear and a crippling inability to justify what was happening at home even to the staunchest friends of the Soviet Union. Characteristically, it took a strident attack on Ehrenburg in a right-wing Paris newspaper to restore some of his lost equilibrium. Having read the article, Ehrenburg baffled a friend by raising his glass to toast "our enemies."

The syndrome exhibited here is one which many a Communist sympathizer stubbornly resisting a break with the movement will readily recognize. Apparently Ehrenburg managed to regain his ability to function within and in behalf of the system by being reminded, not of the residual virtues of his own camp, but of the viciousness of the "enemy" or, more exactly, of the latter's unremitting hostility, which presumably persuaded him that a moral choice was not possible.

Ehrenburg's hemmed-in urge to understand his era and himself asserts itself most explicitly in what seems, on the whole, an honest attempt to reconstruct "the thoughts and feelings of one Soviet writer" in the fateful days of March 1953. "I did not love Stalin," he writes, "but I had long believed in him and feared him."[4] To some of us, Ehrenburg's fear may sound more credible than his belief. This writer for one is prepared to concede the possibility that, for all his erstwhile skepticism and vaunted sophistication, Ehrenburg had not remained immune to the debilitating "epidemics of the Stalin cult." ("Though the faith of others did not set my heart on fire, at times it overwhelmed me.") This might explain the rather embarrassing helplessness of Ehrenburg's immediate response to the news about the death of a man who had subjected his generation to a harrowing and degrading ordeal. It seems that the aging writer's first reaction was: "What will become of us now?" Not until he had recovered from the shock of this pseudo-bereavement did he feel free to heave a minimum sight of relief: "I do not know if things will be better or worse, but they will be different."[5]

Not surprisingly, Ehrenburg is reluctant to honor in full the heedless promise he gave his readers in Part 4 to draw up a balance sheet of the Stalin period. Whatever hints at a total assessment of the era do emerge from his meanderings suggest a fundamental ambivalence somewhat reminiscent of the dual view of Stalin's Russia in A. Tvardovski's poem "Horizons beyond Horizons": Stalin committed many crimes, but "under Stalin our people transformed backward Russia into a modern power."

Do the achievements of Soviet society cancel out and ultimately vindicate the ruthlessness of the Stalin dictatorship? Interestingly enough, Ehrenburg says nothing of the kind. In fact, in his discussion of the means-vs.-ends dilemma, he comes as close as he ever does in this rambling chronicle to calling into question some of the underlying assumptions of the regime:

One cannot establish justice by committing notoriously unjust acts, or fight for equality by turning the people into wheels and cogs and oneself into a mythical deity. The means always affect the end; they either elevate it or degrade it.[6]

Now this sounds almost Koestlerian, though inevitably the implication is that Boleshevik Machiavellianism originated with Stalin.

The anguished weighing of Stalin's crimes leads into the immensely difficult question of a generation's complicity and compliance. Characteristically, Ehrenburg feels that he owes his readers an explanation as to why he did not write another "I Cannot Keep Silent!" when he was in Paris in 1938. (The reference obviously is to Lev Tolstoy's noble pamphlet denouncing the mass executions of Russian revolutionaries in 1907.) Tolstoy, presumably, had no stake in the Tsarist regime and thus was not afraid of giving aid and comfort to its enemies. Not so Ehrenburg, who "knew that our people were continuing, through poverty and misery, along the arduous path of the October Revolu-

[2] *Ibid.*
[3] *Ibid.*, p. 50.
[4] *Novyi mir*, No. 4, 1965, p. 60.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 64.
[6] *Ibid.*, p. 63.

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tion."[7] Is it necessary to point out that this is scarcely the only difference between the two situations? For one thing, while Tolstoy survived his blast unscathed, Ehrenburg would have faced a choice between permanent exile and imminent liquidation. For another thing, Ilya Ehrenburg is no Lev Tolstoy. This, in itself, is not a particularly invidious thing to say: Russian literature has produced only one Lev Tolstoy.

More broadly, Ehrenburg's apologia is once again a bit disingenuous. As this author suggested earlier, for men like Ehrenburg the cost of survival was somewhat higher than silence. Certainly, no sane person could have expected him "to stop the crimes"—or raise his voice in a suicidal protest—at a time when, as he puts it, "more influential and better informed men were powerless." Indeed, whether we in the non-Communist world have a moral right to blame a Soviet writer for collaborating with totalitarianism may well be a moot point. Yet, what is clearly at issue here is not that Ehrenburg was often silent but that he was occasionally vocal.

The need for self-justification so apparent in the passage just mentioned is writ large in the final installment of *People, Years, Life*—especially in its last, stocktaking pages. Many reviewers have commented on the seemingly paramount concern of Ehrenburg the memoir-writer with his reputation or "image." One reason why this salvage operation appears at times rather strenuous is that, in presenting himself to the reader, Ehrenburg had to reckon with two different, if partly overlapping, audiences.

It has often been said that his autobiography is addressed primarily to the young Russian intelligentsia and, ultimately, to posterity. Yet in retracing his tortuous career, Ehrenburg could not afford to ignore altogether the official Soviet pieties. It is in deference to the latter, I suspect, that he makes so much of his early involvement with the Bolshevik underground organization when still a schoolboy of fifteen, and that he explains away his aloofness from the Revolution in what was his most creative and characteristic decade as a temporary aberration. Conversely, he obviously has his younger and less doctrinaire public uppermost in mind when he softpedals his association with the Stalin regime; when he quotes selectively from his ill-fated *Pravda* article of 1948 on the Jewish question so as to make it appear primarily as an attack on antisemitism rather than a violent denunciation of Jewish ethnic consciousness; and finally when, in recounting his active participation in the Peace Congresses, he conveniently emphasizes his more conciliatory and mellow pronouncements.

Yet, retrospective manipulation of evidence and careful image-building are only part of the story. "Many pages of the book," says Ehrenburg as he bids his readers farewell, "were dictated by love."[8] The phrase may sound maudlin, but it is, I believe, fundamentally true.

In an earlier article for this journal, I noted the appealing warmth of Ehrenburg's tributes to the colorful and richly-endowed individuals with whom he had been privileged to rub shoulders in the course of his long and restless life. His heroes in the final section of his memoirs are chiefly the "progressive" Western intellectuals who played a prominent part in the "Peace" movement —Pablo Neruda, Joliot-Curie, Paul Eluard, Carlo Levi. To be sure, Ehrenburg stands to derive some moral prestige from cuddling up, in retrospect, to these impressive and —whatever their political vagaries —brave men. It is hardly surprising that Ehrenburg would much rather be remembered as a friend to Joliot-Curie—or, for that matter, as an ally of Paustovski—than as a detractor of "Zionism." Yet, his unabashed admiration for men of an integrity and courage sturdier than his own is a genuine, if indirect, tribute to the values which he was not always able to uphold. Few of his more sensitive readers will fail to grasp the message.

[7] *Ibid.*, p. 62.

[8] *Ibid.*, p. 83.

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HISTORY IN PERSPECTIVE

Murder Revisited:

The Case of Sergei Mironovich Kirov

By Hugo Dewar

The 30th anniversary of the assassination of the Bolshevik leader and Politburo member Sergei Kirov (which took place December 1, 1934) passed without mention of the "thorough inquiry" Khrushchev had promised into this event that marked the beginning of the era of the great Stalin purges. While a commemorative article was published in *Pravda* and a biography of Kirov by S. V. Krasnikov appeared in 1964, neither of these items offered any fresh material toward a solution of the Kirov mystery.

During the course of his secret speech at the 20th Party Congress in 1956, Khrushchev had announced that the party leaders were not satisfied with the hitherto accepted account of the assassination. "It must be asserted," he said, "that to this day the circumstances surrounding Kirov's murder hide many things which are inexplicable and mysterious and demand the most careful examination." There were reasons to suspect, he added, that Kirov's murderer, Nikolaiev, had been "assisted by someone from among the people whose duty it was to protect the person of Kirov." He then cited some details:

A month before the killing, Nikolaiev was arrested on the ground of suspicious behavior, but he was released and not even searched. It is an unusually suspicious circumstance that when the Chekist assigned to protect Kirov was being brought for an interrogation, on December 2, 1934, he was killed in a car "accident." After the murder of Kirov, top functionaries of the Leningrad NKVD were given very light sentences, but in 1937 they were shot. We can assume that they were shot in order to cover the traces of the organizers of Kirov's killing.[1]

In 1961, some five years after Khrushchev's first disclosures, the Soviet people at large learned of the Kirov "affair" in the course of the Premier's attack on the "anti-party group" at the 22nd Party Congress. Molotov, Kaganovich, Malenkov, Voroshilov, and others, he stated, had "violently" resisted the 20th Congress' decision to launch the destalinization campaign and had continued their resistance afterward, because they feared that "their role as accessories to mass reprisals" would come to light. He went on:

Mr. Dewar is a British analyst of Soviet affairs, and author of a comprehensive study of purges in Communist countries, The Modern Inquisition *(London, Allan Wingate, 1953).*

[1] *The Anti-Stalin Campaign and International Communism: A Selection of Documents,* New York, Columbia University Press, 1965, pp. 25-26.

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These mass reprisals began after the assassination of Kirov. Great efforts are still needed to find out who was really to blame for his death. The deeper we study the materials connected with Kirov's death, the more questions arise. . . . A thorough inquiry is now being made into the circumstances of this complicated case.[2]

In further statements at the 22nd Congress, it was asserted that Nikolaiev had in fact been arrested on two occasions before the crime, that arms had been found on him,. but that he had been released. Kirov's bodyguard was said to have been killed while on his way to be questioned by Stalin, Molotov and Voroshilov. It was no longer "assumed" but presented as fact that the NKVD functionairies had been shot in 1937 in order to cover up the traces of those involved in the assassination.

If one turns to the evidence presented at the Moscow Trial of March 1938, it will be seen that the substance of Khrushchev's "revelations" had long ago been put on record. The testimony given at the trial reflected its double aim: to reinforce the Stalinists' previous charges against "Trotskyites and Zinovievites" and at the same time to "purge the purgers." Yet discounting embellishment, certain essential facts about the Kirov killing emerged at this time. G. G. Yagoda, former chief of the NKVD, now himself in the dock, gave this version of the affair:

In 1934, in the summer, Yenukidze informed me that the center of the "block of Rights and Trotskyites" had adopted a decision to organize the assassination of Kirov. Rykov took a direct part in the adoption of this decision. . . . I marshalled a series of arguments about this terrorist act being inexpedient and unnecessary. . . . Yenukidze insisted that I was not to place any obstacle in the way; the terrorist act, he said, would be carried out by the Trotsky-Zinovievite group. Owing to this, I was compelled to instruct Zaporozhetz, who occupied the post of Assistant Chief of the Regional Administration of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, not to place any obstacles in the way of the terrorist act against Kirov. Some time later Zaporozhetz informed me that the organs of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs had detained Nikolaiev, in whose possession a revolver and a chart of the route Kirov usually took had been found. Nikolaiev was released. Soon after that Kirov was assassinated by this very same Nikolaiev.[3]

Yagoda's secretary, Bulanov, dealt with the "accident" to Kirov's bodyguard as follows:

Yagoda further told me that Borisov, an employee of the Leningrad Administration of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, had a share in the assassination of Kirov. When members of the government came to Leningrad . . . to interrogate him as a witness . . . Zaporozhetz . . . fearing that Borisov would betray those who stood behind Nikolaiev, decided to kill Borisov. On Yagoda's instructions, Zaporozhetz so arranged it that an accident occurred to the automobile which took Borisov to the Smolny. Borisov was killed in the accident. . . . I then understood the exceptional and unusual solicitude which Yagoda had displayed when Medved, Zaporozhetz and the other officials were brought to trial.[4]

This earlier trial of NKVD officials had also been made public at the time (1935). The indictment against them stated *inter alia* that F. D. Medved, chief of the Leningrad NKVD, and most of the others accused (twelve in all) had possessed information concerning the preparation for the attempt on Kirov but had taken no measures to prevent the crime, even though they had every chance to do so.[5] Furthermore, it was clear from what was said about them at the 1938 Moscow Trial that Medved and Zaporozhetz had been shot in 1937.

Thus the facts given out by Khrushchev were hardly new. Although these facts without doubt came as something of a sensation to the party's younger rank and file, all of the top leaders surviving from the purge period must have known them. Certainly it did not require years of investigation to dig them up.

What is new, of course, is the fresh interpretation given these facts. With the launching of the destalinization campaign, Khrushchev assigned the Kirov affair a role in the picture of the past that he was anxious to have the Soviet public accept. Kirov's assassination was now presented as marking the entry into an entirely new phase of Soviet history; it was allegedly the true beginning of the Stalin era, during which Leninist party and state norms, hitherto prevailing, suffered a temporary defeat.

In his "secret speech Khrushchev put it like this:

After the criminal murder of Kirov mass repressions and brutal acts of violation of socialist legality began.[6]

The basis for these mass repressions, Khrushchev recalled, was a decree of December 1, 1934 (the very day of the murder), which demanded a

[2] N. S. Khrushchev, *Report on the Program of the CPSU,* Soviet Booklet No. 81, London, 1961, p. 111; also *Pravda,* Oct. 19, 1961.

[3] People's Commissariat of Justice of the USSR, *Report of the Court Proceedings, March 2-13, 1938,* Moscow, 1938, pp. 572-3.

[4] *Ibid.,* p. 559.

[5] *New York Times,* Jan. 24, 1935.

[6] *The Anti-Stalin Campaign . . .,* p. 24.

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speed-up of investigations into terrorist acts, the denial of any right of appeal against sentences, and the carrying out of the death sentence immediately after a verdict.[7]

By 1961 Khrushchev and his supporters openly asserted that Stalin and his closest colleagues had seized on the Kirov murder to launch the era of terror, and the implication was strong that they may have indeed been accomplices in the act itself. Thus, in the 1959 edition of the history of the CPSU (which replaced the Stalinist work published in 1938), the assassination was still treated as the result of a plot by the "Zinovievites"; but in the revised edition of 1962 Stalin is accused of using the assassination as an excuse for organizing reprisals against all those who in one way or another displeased him. This approach echoed the line taken at the 22nd Congress by A. N. Shelepin (at the time Chairman of the Committee for State Security):

The assassination of Sergei Mironovich Kirov was used by Stalin and Molotov and Kaganovich, who were close to him, as an excuse for settling accounts with people they disliked (s neugodnymi liudmi.)[8]

Obviously Khrushchev's probe into the Kirov affair was useful to him first as a threat and finally as a weapon in the struggle against the "anti-party elements." Yet the problem remained—and still remains for those who have replaced Khrushchev—to produce a full explanation of this event, which even today continues to hound the trail of Stalin's erstwhile friends and associates.

In accordance with a decision of the 22nd Party Congress to honor the memory of victims of the "personality cult," *Pravda* from time to time carries articles on this theme. One such article, dealing with the 17th congress of the CPSU (1934), is an interesting example of the manner in which the anti-Stalinists try to explain how things went wrong.[9]

At the 17th Congress, says this article, the party was "united and monolithic." This was the "congress of the victors," at which even former members of the opposition groupings—Zinoviev, Kamenev, Bukharin, Rykov and Tomski—came forward to extol the successes achieved by socialist construction and to express their repentance for their past attitudes. By the time of this congress "the authority of the party had grown exceptionally"; this was the congress that marked the "firm and irrevocable victory of socialist relationships in our country." N. S. Khrushchev is said to have declared at the Congress: "The strength of our Lenin Central Committee lies in that it knew how to organize the party, knew how to organize the working class and the collective farmers. . . ." The names of some other delegates who spoke for this allegedly "united and monolithic" party are cited, for the purpose of "rehabilitating" them. Among those mentioned are I. Zelenski and G. Grinko, two of the accused at the 1938 Moscow trial; but no reference is made to the trial itself.

Kirov is referred to as "the wonderful Leninist," the "favorite of the entire party" (the words, incidentally, used by Lenin in his "Testament" to characterize Bukharin). "Less than a year passed after the 17th Congress when a criminal hand cut short the life of Kirov. . . . This was a premeditated and carefully prepared crime, the circumstances of which, as N. S. Khrushchev declared at the 22nd Congress, have not yet been fully cleared up."

The writer's appraisal of the inner-party situation at the time of the 17th Congress renders the subsequent fate of the party incomprehensible. In this united and monolithic organization vested with such exceptional authority, how did it come about that—as the writer admits—70 percent of the Central Committee, and 1,108 of the 1,966 delegates who unanimously elected it, were subsequently condemned as counterrevolutionary traitors? Quite obviously this could not have happened under the conditions described.

That the 17th Congress did indeed express the mood of jubilation and relief then prevailing in the top circles and among the activists of the party is indisputable. But underlying this mood was an awareness of the monstrous forces of repression and terror that had been created—forces that the activists themselves had helped to create, and yet that were in a sense alien and threatening to them. Hence the ovation given by the delegates to Kirov, who appeared at the congress as the outstanding champion of the authority of the party against the authority of the secret police.

There exists a document which is of exceptional value for an understanding of the political atmosphere of the time, which explains Kirov's role and the hopes centered in him, and which also throws light on the motives of Leonid Nikolaiev, his assassin. This is the so-called "Letter of an Old Bolshevik," first published anonymously in two issues of the Menshevik monthly, *Sotsialisticheski vestnik* (Paris, December 22, 1936, and January 17, 1937); and subsequently published as a pamphlet, also anonymously, by the Rand School Press, New York City, 1937. The identity of the author, none other than N. I. Bukharin, was not revealed by the editorial board of *Sotsialisticheski vestnik* until November 23, 1959. (Bukharin at his trial in 1938 admitted that he had met in Paris, on his last trip abroad, a representative of the Mensheviks,

[7] Khrushchev mentioned only Yenukidze as signatory of this decree, omitting the main signatory, Kalinin.

[8] *Pravda,* Oct. 27, 1961, p. 10, col. 3.

[9] L. Shaumyan, "Na rubezhe pervykh pyatiletok" (On the threshold of the first five-year plans), *Pravda,* Feb. 7, 1964.

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Boris Nikolaievsky. It is not without significance that Bukharin knew that if he could trust no one else, he could trust his lifelong ideological opponents.)

Bukharin writes that Kirov "stood for the abolition of the terror, both in general and inside the party."

We do not desire to exaggerate the importance of his proposals. It must not be forgotten that when the first Five-Year Plan was being put into effect, Kirov was one of the heads of the party, that he was one of those who inspired and carried through the notoriously ruthless measures against the peasants and the wiping out of the kulaks. The Kem and Murmansk coasts, with their prison camps, etc., were under his jurisdiction. Furthermore, he was in charge of the construction of the Baltic-White Sea Canal. This is enough to make it clear that Kirov could not be reproached with any undue regard for human lives.[10]

Yet according to Bukharin, Kirov's previous role only served to strengthen his position as the advocate of reconciliation with former opposition elements, once the struggle for collectivization was over and there remained "no more irreconcilable foes of any importance."

It could be argued from this that Kirov stood in 1934 where the anti-Stalinists stand today. And, indeed, it is precisely this that makes Kirov so attractive a figure to the present leaders: it is possible to portray him as a precursor, a fighter against anti-party elements and a defender of the true Leninist tradition that the present regime has succeeded in reviving. Had he not been gotten rid of by the Stalinists, the argument goes, the mass repressions and violations of socialist legality would never have occurred.

The grain of truth in all this does not make it any the less a distortion of the facts. To get at the real truth one must also consider the other figure central to the drama, Leonid Nikolaiev. Who was this man? What were his motives?

Practically no official information about Nikolaiev has ever been divulged; but from Bukharin's "Letter" we learn that he fought on the front against Yudenich's forces at the age of sixteen,[11] that he there joined the Komsomol, and later became a member of the party in Leningrad. At one time he was apparently connected with the NKVD. He also held a minor post as supervisor of a forced labor camp in Murmansk.. In 1933 he returned to Leningrad where, it was rumored, he was again connected in some way with the NKVD (although this, wrote Bukharin, was kept especially secret). Early in 1934 he came into conflict with the party and was expelled, but was reinstated shortly afterwards on the grounds that he was suffering from nervous exhaustion and that too much should not therefore be expected of him.

The Moscow correspondent of the British *Daily Worker* at the time, W. G. Sheppard, stated that Nikolaiev had formerly been a member of the Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.[12] This item of information is probably valid. It ties in with the mention by Victor Serge of a Nikolaiev who, as an investigator of the Worker's and Peasants' Inspection in Leningrad, had been instrumental in obtaining the reinstatement of Serge's father-in-law, Russakov, into his trade union. Serge describes Nikolaiev as "a tall, lean young man, grey-eyed, with tousled hair, who showed himself singularly honest."[13]

Bukharin's "Letter" refers to the diary that was found on Nikolaiev when he was arrested.[14] Limited extracts from this diary, which were circulated among a select circle as top secret (to be returned when read), sufficed to indicate Nikolaiev's state of mind at the time. According to Bukharin:

Everything seems to point to the fact that his mind was preoccupied principally with personal conflicts with the party machine, which was becoming increasingly bureaucratic. The diary is full of references of this kind, and of complaints of the disappearance of the old friendly relationships which had made life in the party so pleasant in the years following the revolution. He returned again and again to the memories of those days, which appeared to him very simple and rosy, the days of a sort of brotherhood. . . . His complaints about the bureaucratism that had developed inside the party were the starting point of Nikolaiev's critical attitude. Further than that he did not go. The striking thing is the disproportion between the gravity of his act and the absence of any more profound criticism on his part. . . . Nothing existed for Nikolaiev outside the party. . . . To the condition of inner-party relationships he began to react with growing intensity, and gradually he came to regard the situation as a veritable betrayal of the fine party traditions of the past, as a betrayal of the revolution itself.[15]

The irony here revealed is that Nikolaiev — the killer of Kirov—saw *himself* as a champion of the "fine party traditions of the past." In strict justice, therefore, the anti-Stalinists ought at least to recognize that Nikolaiev was neither the common criminal

[10] *Letter of an Old Bolshevik,* Rand School Press, New York, 1937.

[11] Was he related to the General Nikolaiev taken prisoner on this front and hanged after refusing an offer by Yudenich to join his forces? See Erich Wollenberg, *The Red Army,* London, Secker & Warburg, 1940, p. 64.

[12] *The Truth about the Murder of Kirov,* London, Modern Books, n.d., p. 7.

[13] *Mémoires d'un Revolutionnaire,* Paris, Eds. du Seuil, 1951, p. 301.

[14] Both Yagoda and his secretary, Bulanov, confirmed the existence of this diary at their trial.

[15] *Letter of an Old Bolshevik,* pp. 28-29.

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they make him out to be, nor merely a man oppressed by a personal grievance. Granted that he was gravely mistaken as to the effect of his act—that it must inevitably have had consequences opposite to those it was intended to produce. Still, all that he wanted was, like Zheliabov, "to give history a push"—in the direction of "destalinization." He knew from close personal experience the rottenness of the party regime; he saw no essential difference between the existing situation and that under Tsarism (he had, wrote Bukharin, steeped himself in the literature of the People's Will and the Social Revolutionaries and been profoundly influenced by it); he knew that there was no hope of change through the channels of inner-party democracy, which had become an empty slogan. Thus he came to the conclusion that there was only one way of effective action left open: someone had to sacrifice himself by executing a prominent representative of the "usurpers," as he called them, and so rouse the country to the danger facing it. Bukharin reports the story that when Stalin asked him why he had committed the murder, and pointed out to him that he was a lost man, Nikolaiev replied: "What does it matter? Many are going under now. But in the days to come my name will be coupled with those of Zheliabov and Balmashev."

Nikolaiev was not to know that certain men behind Stalin were themselves interested in getting rid of Kirov. To Nikolaiev—and to how many others like him?—Kirov was obviously neither more nor less than one of the "usurpers." What could he know of the struggle on the summit of power between the "conciliators" and the advocates of continued ruthless repression? Certainly he was aware of nothing to alter his opinion of Kirov as the close companion of Stalin,[16] and a dedicated, ruthless executor of Stalinist policy.

But even in the unlikely event that Nikolaiev had recognized Kirov as a co-thinker, and that the assassination had therefore never occurred, would this really have made any difference at all to the subsequent course of events? Is it not clear that the long-drawn-out struggle between the Stalinized party and the Stalinist secret police inevitably had to come to a head? The "mysterious and suspicious circumstances" surrounding Kirov's death amount simply to the fact that the advocates of repression, who already controlled the country, regarded Kirov as a menace to their authority, and that they were therefore glad to get rid of him, using Nikolaiev as their unwitting instrument. This one killing was used as a pretext for mass killings, but a pretext for them would in any event have been found because Stalin's "working staff" needed one. As Bukharin put it, the members of his staff were not in principle "opposed to a change in the *general policy* of the party"—they were not even interested in general policy as such. "*What they emphatically opposed was any change in internal party policy.* They realized that . . . they could expect no mercy in the event of a change in the inner-party regime."[17] And they knew of course—none better—that the number desiring such a change was not negligible. The extent and ferocity of the "mass reprisals" following Kirov's death can be explained only on the basis of the feeling of fear and insecurity prevailing among those who were the major prop of the regime, the men of the NKVD. They knew how much they were hated, and by how many.

Nikolaiev acted as a lone individual; there was no Trotskyite-Zinovievite-Bukharinite plot. But Stalin and his general staff knew that there existed throughout the country a sharp mood of extreme bitterness and incipient revolt against their dictatorship, and that Nikolaiev's act was an expression of this mood. It was for them essential to get rid of all former oppositional elements in the party and the state apparatus—to remove anyone at all who might conceivably serve to crystallize that mood into action. In due course, even to venture a word of protest in favor of one unjustly accused was taken as indicative of dangerous thinking.[18]

In his "secret" speech, Khrushchev himself gave an example from the year 1931 of the methods used in the internecine struggle for supreme power,[19] and in so doing contradicted his general thesis that the rot only set in after 1934. But, of course, that struggle had begun immediately upon Lenin's death, and it became progressively more deadly and bloody. Sooner or later—Kirov affair or no Kirov affair—the line of blood would have finally closed the balance sheet and marked the victory of Stalinism. Khrushchev was at his most un-Marxist when he said that "had Lenin lived, such an extreme method would not have been used against many" Trotskyite opponents of the "general line." On the contrary, had Lenin lived, he would have stood in the dock with Bukharin. Stalin's treatment of Krupskaia shows that he was no respecter of persons, however eminent.

The question arises: How did Khrushchev have the nerve to carry his charges against Stalin and

[16] When the regime's spokesmen today talk of those who were close to Stalin, they perhaps forget that *The Short Biography of Stalin* (Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House, 1951) carries a 1926 photograph of Stalin and Kirov together. The only other persons so honored are Lenin, Kalinin and Gorky. No mention is made of Kirov's assassination in the biography.

[17] *Letter of an Old Bolshevik*, p. 29 (emphasis in original).

[18] Note the case of D. A. Lazurkin, for example, a party member from 1902 on, who spent 17 years in prisons and camps for this offense. See *Pravda*, Oct. 21, 1963.

[19] *The Anti-Stalin Campaign . . .*, p. 66.

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his cohorts as far as he did without apparently entertaining any serious fear that his audience would draw the "wrong" conclusions—notably in the matter of his own complicity? The only explanation would seem to be that the present Soviet generation is not able to check the facts it is now given against its own knowledge of the events to which those facts relate. It has no such knowledge. The facts about the circumstances surrounding the Kirov murder were new to it; it did not know that these very facts had been used at the Moscow Trials to incriminate —not Stalin and his close companions—but Stalin's enemies in the party, or those insufficiently subservient to him. This generation does not know that the rehabilitation of Zelenski, Grinko, and Ikramov invalidates their evidence at the third Moscow Trial, evidence incriminating themselves and the other defendants. It does not know that the same is true of the rehabilitation of Yenukidze and Rudzutak, who—although they were not then in the dock (having been tried and condemned in separate and secret trials)—were in effect equally among the accused at the trial.

The report of the "thorough enquiry" into the Kirov affair promised by Khrushchev in 1961 will—if it is a true account, and if it is ever made public—be of enormous importance to the present Soviet generation. For it could herald the official demolition of the most monstrous edifice of lies and slander ever erected by any government in the entire history of mankind: the Moscow Trials. And not only the Moscow Trials, the keystone of which was the Kirov affair, but also the trials that preceded them and of which—as Vyshinski pointed out at the last great trial—they were a logical extension.

This work of demolition would give the Soviet people a clear view of their own political history; it would, further, lift from their minds the remaining load of suspicion of the outside world inculcated by those trials. The new anti-Stalinists have chipped at the structure, even made great holes in it, yet it still stands, a horrible memento to the depths of depravity to which mankind is capable of sinking.

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